

Template ONE

Dear Legislator,

As a parent, voter, and concerned citizen, I urge you to vote "yes" on SB 993 and HB 1886 to create the Missouri Special Needs Scholarship Tax Credit program. As you know, Missouri has thousands of children with special needs and many of them are not receiving the quality of education they need to be successful.

This legislation would create a scholarship program allowing parents to choose the best educational setting for their special needs children. The importance of a strong foundation in education is irreplaceable and could make all the difference in the world to these kids. It could be the difference between lives that consist of long-term institutionalized care and those that make productive contributions to society.

Education is an issue of concern for all political parties and for every Missourian. Clearly, there is bipartisan support for this legislation. In fact, HB 1886 has over 60 co-sponsors from both sides of the aisle.

Missouri would not be the first state to enact this type of legislation. Successful special needs scholarship programs exist in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Ohio, and Utah.

I believe these bills would create tremendous possibilities for Missouri special needs children. Please give your vote and your support to SB 993 and HB 1886.

Sincerely,

Name

Template TWO

Dear Legislator:

As a parent of a special needs child, I am writing to express my strong support for the special needs bills. House Bill 1886 and Senate Bill 993 create the Special Needs Scholarship Tax Credit Program, which can help special needs children around the state get the education they need.

Currently, parents of special needs children are struggling to find educational services that are not being provided by local public school districts. Some parents, fighting for their child, have moved multiple times, quit their jobs, and relied on family and friends for support. Currently in Missouri, there are more than 100,000 children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and more than 130,000 special needs students. **It is impossible for every school district to provide services to all these children; the need is too great and too varied.**

This legislation will serve K-12 students who are mentally handicapped, speech and language impaired, physically impaired and those diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. The program will grant scholarships to these students and parents, which will let them choose to send their child to another public school or an approved private school. The scholarship not only covers part or all of the tuition, it also includes transportation to a public school outside the student's district.

The program is funded by individual or corporate taxpayers who donate into a scholarship granting organization. The donors will take a tax credit against the taxpayer's state tax liability up to 80% of the taxpayer's contribution.

If passed, these bills can greatly help some of Missouri's most vulnerable populations and their parents find the education they are desperately seeking.

I encourage you to vote yes on these bills, for parents of special needs children all throughout Missouri!

Sincerely,

Name