



BECAUSE *we are* CATHOLIC

Give Kids the Credit! Rally features 700-plus students from more than 30 schools

More than 700 students from 11 Maryland counties and Baltimore City converged on Annapolis Wednesday morning for Nonpublic School Advocacy Day. Governor Larry Hogan, Senate President Mike Miller, Senator Ed De Grange, Delegate Jim Proctor, the Most Rev. William Lori and Rabbi Ariel Sadwin addressed the students during a rally in the Miller Senate Office Building.

Last week, the Maryland Education Credit bill (Senate Bill 405 & House Bill 487) was heard in the Senate Budget & Taxation and House Ways & Means Committees. The Maryland Education Credit is dedicated to ensuring that every K-12 student in Maryland has access to high-quality, diverse, and affordable education opportunities.

The legislation would provide any qualifying Maryland business with a tax credit equal to 60% of its donation toward education assistance. This tax credit incentive seeks to promote business investment to assist the state's public and nonpublic school students and their families.

"This assistance is urgently needed especially in our inner city schools, where Catholic schools are anchors in their communities and provide life-changing opportunities to students who face very challenging circumstances," said Lori, the Archbishop of Baltimore.

After the rally, students headed to Lawyers' Mall, viewed legislative sessions in both the Senate and House Chambers and some met with their legislators.

"I love my school, and look forward to going there every day. All of the teachers are so supportive and want nothing but the best for all of the students. Our Principal, Mrs. Hawkins, works very hard to make sure that our students have the best education in the world," said Kayla Boyette, a fourth grade honor student at Holy Family Catholic School in Hillcrest Heights during the luncheon with legislators. "We are all encouraged to be the best we can be. We are taught that we must respect everyone in class because we may be sitting right next to the next President."

The passage of the Maryland Education Credit would help lower-income families - from BOTH public and nonpublic schools - afford tuition and other educational expenses for their children. It would give kids the opportunity to attend schools which best suit their needs. Low-income children receive first priority for financial assistance.

"My parents tell me that they could not have chosen a better school for me to attend," Boyette added. "I don't know the exact cost of my school but my parents told me that we have one of the lowest tuitions. Unfortunately, I lost seven classmates because their families could no longer afford the cost. The Maryland Education Credit will help with things like tuition, books, uniforms, and computers. It will also help reduce class sizes in public schools, help to keep private schools open, and I will not lose any more friends."

No money is given directly to schools, but rather directly to families through state-registered nonprofit organizations, who must comply with accountability procedures governed by the State Department of Business and Economic Development.



Kayla Boyette, a fourth grade honor student at Holy Family Catholic School in Hillcrest Heights, speaks to her peers during the luncheon with legislators.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MARYLAND SERVES AND ADVOCATES FOR THE POOR, VULNERABLE AND THOSE IN NEED NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE CATHOLIC, BUT BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC.