



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

"Bishops Take Education Credit Fight to Albany" is in the Tablet this week about my bill S. 6808.

MARTIN J. GOLDEN March 21, 2014

helping students, and I pray for their sake that our efforts are successful. The time to pass this bill is now," said Cardinal Dolan. "With the support of so many of our state's great labor unions and business leaders, and so many of my brothers and sisters in ministry, I think we have a great chance to do so."

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The bill that the bishops are backing (S.6808, A.1826-C) is sponsored by Senator Martin Golden (R-Brooklyn) and Assembly Member Michael Cusick (D-Staten Island). It would create a tax credit for those who make a charitable donation for educational purposes.

The bishops see this as a reasonable request since New York State already provides tax credits for many other purposes.

Low-income and middle-class students would benefit directly from up to \$150 million in annual charitable contributions to non-profit scholarship organizations providing tuition

St. Matthias, and all across New York."

The state's Catholic schools are facing a crisis. While demand is still high, families increasingly are unable to afford tuition, which has risen to keep pace with costs. Decades ago, these schools were largely staffed by religious sisters and brothers, which is no longer the case, leading to dramatically higher payrolls.

School Closures

As a result, more than 250 Catholic schools in New York State have closed statewide over the last 20 years, dozens of them in the past few years alone.

Recently the Diocese of Buffalo announced a new round of double-digit school closings at the end of the current school year.

"If this proposal had already been law, I am convinced we in the Diocese

Albany. Below, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio thanks Sen. Golden for his work on the Education Investment Incentive Act.

of Buffalo wouldn't be closing 10 schools in June," said Buffalo Bishop Richard Malone. "How many more fine schools must we lose? For the sake of all children, the education investment tax credit must pass."

More than 65 organizations – labor unions, community groups, business groups, clergy, educators and others – have signed on in support. The initiative is sponsored by two-thirds of the Assembly Democratic majority, including leaders of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus. It has passed previously in the Senate with overwhelming support from Democrats and Republicans, and has been included in the Senate's budget resolution.

"The Education Investment Tax



Credit is the top priority of the New York State Bishops this year, for a simple reason: If a child cannot access a quality education, whether in a public, religious or charter school, then he or she will not succeed in life. The evidence of this is clear," said Bishop

