

October 13, 2021

RE: House Bill 1 – Excellence in Education for All Act

On behalf of the 93 member Christian schools and nearly 15,000 Christian school students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, we want to express our support for HB 1 – Excellence in Education for All Act. If the COVID-19 Pandemic and the subsequent Delta Variant has taught us anything, it is that **parents must be empowered** to make educational decisions *they* believe best for their child AND **government leaders should support students**, not just educational systems, toward that end. HB1 – Excellence in Education for All Act does just that! In a very practical way, HB1 provides resources that allows ALL STUDENTS IN THE COMMONWEALTH, not just those financially capable, to choose an education that will serve them best.

During the pandemic, private Christian schools remained committed to on-campus, in-person education while many schools reduced instructional hours, offered only remote learning, and cancelled student activities. Christian schools focused on the health and safety of their students and staff, academic progress and preparation, and social and emotional well-being. All accomplished reasonably and responsibly. As a direct result of the state tax credit program, these schools extended their efforts to students who otherwise would not have been financially able to make the switch from a “free” public school that was educating remotely to a tuition-based private school educating in-person.

Unfortunately, there was not enough funds to support the hundreds of students who wanted access to an education that would best serve their needs. It is estimated that there is currently \$121 million in scholarships needed to support the students and families who desire a different education than they are currently receiving. HB1 provides funding and safeguards that better ensure that parents and students can make an educational choice that best meets their needs and desired outcomes. Educational choice should not be an opportunity based upon affluency but a right based upon how one goes about preparing for “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”. Thank you for supporting HB1.

Sincerely,

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