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Texas Senate



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For Immediate Release
April 7, 2015

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Texas Tax Credit Scholarships Advance
Senate Education Committee Votes 8-3

Austin - By an 8-3 bi-partisan vote, the Senate Education Committee passed the Tax Credit Scholarship 100 million dollar pilot program based upon SB 642, Bettencourt, as amended and rolled into SB 4, by Education Chair Larry Taylor with joint authors Senators Paul Bettencourt and Donna Campbell.

"This is a great concept , tax credit scholarships, that has successfully worked in 14 other states. That is why I filed SB 642 the original bill, and am proud to see the revised bill voted out of committee by 8-3," said Senator Paul Bettencourt.

The tax credit scholarships are established by allowing any Texas business to donate up to 50% of their yearly May Franchise Tax Liability and receive a credit for it with the Comptroller's office. The business donates to one of 25 Educational Assistance organizations in the state pre-qualified by the Comptroller's office. The non-profit then provides public \$500 scholarships and up to 75% of WADA or \$5927 private school scholarships.

"Chairman Taylor will lead the floor debate on this important 100 million dollar tax credit scholarship bill. SB 4, as a joint author, I am fully committed to its passage in the Texas Senate," added Bettencourt.

The Education Assistance Organizations in the bill as passed award scholarships and assistance for qualifying education expenses to eligible students who demonstrate the greatest financial and academic needs student families are means tested to 250% the income guidelines necessary to qualify for the national free or reduced-price lunch program. Children with defined disabilities are not means tested.

"Finally, Tax Credit Scholarships are a major success in Florida where they have saved the state 2 billion dollars over 14 years, and have been re-approved each Session by wide bipartisan majorities in their state legislature due to the success of students using the Parental Choice provided by these scholarships," stated Senator Bettencourt.

Floor debate on SB 4 is expected within a week in the full Senate.