



DIOCESE OF BUFFALO
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

February 18, 2015

Dear Parents, Teachers, Friends and Supporters of our children in Catholic schools:

I write to inform you of a very promising development in our advocacy efforts to enact the Education Tax Credit proposal and, once again, to seek your help.

Because so many of you have spoken out on this issue by making phone calls, sending emails, meeting with legislators, and raising your voices along with 10,000 others at our April 10, 2013 rally at the First Niagara Center, Governor Cuomo has included our Education Tax Credit proposal as part of his 2015-16 budget recommendations. If enacted, his proposal will provide an additional \$50 million in scholarships to assist tuition-paying families with the education of their children. The bill also provides an equal level of support to public schools.

While inclusion of the measure in the Governor's budget recommendations is an important step forward, there is much yet to do. The Governor must remain committed to ensuring that the proposal is part of the final state budget due to be completed by March 31. Fortunately, the Governor is not alone in supporting this important issue. The State Senate has passed the measure for the fourth time – with very strong bipartisan support. The measure also enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of Assembly members – Democrats and Republicans alike. With all this support, there is very little preventing Gov. Cuomo from finally enacting our Education Tax Credit proposal – but only if he and the Legislature remain committed.

Over the coming weeks, we will be reaching out to the Catholic school community through our Catholic Action Network to continue to make our voices heard during budget negotiations – and to remind the Governor and legislators that tuition-paying families need help. It is very important that we have as many voices as possible in our chorus so I respectfully urge you to take a few moments to join the Catholic Advocacy Network. Simply click this link: [Catholic Action Network](#) or go to: www.nyscatholic.org and click on *Take Action* to sign up.

While our Governor and lawmakers profess support for this measure, until it is actually enacted in law it is critical that they continue to hear our plea. Please join the network and continue in praying that our elected leaders will serve the needs of all God's children, not just some.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Richard J. Malone
Bishop of Buffalo