

An Alternate Way to School Choice

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Your editorial "[Republicans for Monopoly](#)" (Dec. 31) lamenting Pennsylvania's school-choice deadlock misses the real story: The Pennsylvania House passed a massive expansion of the state's Educational Improvement Tax Credit program—already the largest private choice program in terms of the number of students—by 190 votes to seven.

The average credit scholarship is about \$1,000 because private nonprofits spend only what's needed to get a child into a good school, making up the rest with regular charitable donations. The credits are private funds donated voluntarily by the taxpayers who earned them. Fiscal conservatives should applaud doing more with less, not to mention doing it without government funds. And unlike other choice policies, credits don't burden participating schools with excessive regulations.

The tax credit helps more than 40,000 low-income and middle-class children, eligible in all school districts, get a good education. At the current average scholarship amount, the expansion passed in the House would help more than 60,000 additional children.

The absence of union opposition to the measure is a telling sign of success. The tax credit enjoys broad support and rests on solid legal ground; why engage in a hopeless fight? A historic battle for education reform has been won against the status-quo forces, and the tax credit is their instrument of surrender. The Senate and governor need only sign on to complete the victory.

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