

[Letterhead]

[Date]

James L. O'Donnell
Director, PA Department of Community & Economic Development
Tax Credit Division
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Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225
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Dear Mr. O'Donnell ,

As a supporter of a local Christian school which currently benefits from this State's tax credit scholarship program, I respectfully must protest that the DCED is considering adding new non-discrimination language that will jeopardize participation for our local school. This language states:

No assistance shall be awarded to an Organization under this program unless the Organization certifies that the Organization shall not discriminate against any employee or against any person seeking employment by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or in violation of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability, or in violation of any applicable federal laws.

First, Pennsylvania statutes do not give DCED the authority to require such assurances from SO nor from schools participating in the programs.

Second, donations voluntarily given to a private SO by participating private entities are not a form of government funding nor assistance to either the SO or the participating schools.

Third, the new non-discrimination language is self-contradictory. Both federal law and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act have exemptions for religious organizations in employment but the first three lines of the non-discrimination policy do not provide such exemptions.

For these stated reasons, I respectfully request that the Department to remove this language from the state's tax credit scholarship programs.

Very truly yours,

(Signature)