



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MISSOURI
Legislative Update

February 12, 2018

HOUSE COMMITTEE PASSES CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION

The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee approved a House Committee Substitute (HCS) version of HB 2247 (Roeber) on February 5 by a vote of 7-6.

League opposes the bill and appreciates the support of the members who voted against the bill: Representatives Anders, Bangert, Burnett, Morgan, Swan and Wood. Notice that this was bi-partisan opposition.

The bill would allow charter schools to be sponsored by outside entities (other than the local school board) and operate in many districts around the state. Charter schools should be sponsored by and accountable to the local community through the elected school board and approved only after an impact study is conducted by the district to consider the proposal.

Charter schools should be subject to the same standards of accountability, transparency and respect for the rights of students, parents and staff as are applicable to traditional public schools. HB 2247 does not enact these reforms, and *we urge you to communicate with your legislator to oppose this bill.*

TAX CREDIT-STYLE VOUCHERS

The House Ways and Means Committee heard HB 2188 (Matthiesen) on February 6. The bill creates a new 100% state tax credit capped at \$50 million per year for taxpayer contributions to third-party organizations that will use some of the proceeds to fund accounts that parents can use to pay private school tuition and other expenses for their students.

League opposes this and similar proposals to divert public funds to private schools not subject to the same standards of accountability, transparency and respect for the rights of students, staff and parents as apply to public schools. Additionally, Missouri is in a severe budget crisis and doesn't need more tax credits reducing state funding for the needs of the state.