

Good Afternoon Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee.

My name is Taliah Meager, I am in 7th grade and go to Heritage Christian School. I am here to ask for your support for Senate Bill 11. I have attended Heritage since I was in preschool. Throughout my time at Heritage I have had several of my closest friends have to leave due to the high cost of tuition. I am glad that I am lucky enough to be able to go to a school on a full scholarship where I can get a good education, but that doesn't mean that everyone is as fortunate as I am.

Over 1.7 million scholarships are handed out per year throughout the entire United States. 62% of these scholarships are handed out to private schools and 38% are given to public schools. Scientific research states that the number two reason that most students dropout of school is due to financial crises at home. Giving all students the opportunity to receive a scholarship would allow more students to successfully finish school and go to college.

In conclusion, giving access to all students to be able to qualify for a scholarship can really help students and their families with finances and help increase the graduation rate in the U.S. Thank you for your time and have a great evening. If you have any questions I am open to answer them.