

February 6, 2019

Dear Representatives,

Please make distributions for K-12 tuition expenses eligible for the Colorado state tax deduction and protect withdrawals for this use from state tax recapture by supporting HB19-1123, *Income Tax Deduction for 529 Account K-12 Expenses*. This would then reflect the recent changes made at the federal level in the 2017 *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act* and would make Colorado more competitive with other states in supporting school-age families and their educational decisions.

Colorado taxpayers, whether they have school-age children or not, share in the responsibility of funding public education. We, as citizens of the state of Colorado, all benefit from an educational system that meets the needs of all of our children. Our public schools are some of the most successful in the nation at meeting the wide-ranging educational needs of hundreds of thousands of children.

However, there are times when parents feel their child's educational needs are best met outside of the public school system. The reasons parents may choose a private education for their child are many. They may have a child with specific physical, developmental, cognitive, or emotional challenges that their local public school is not able to address according to their child's specific needs. Some parents may opt for a private school for their child because of the school's specific method of teaching or educational philosophy. Other parents may choose a private school for the additional character, faith, or moral development the school can provide. Some parents may have a child with high academic, musical, or athletic aptitude and may want a private school with an emphasis in the area in which their child excels. Still other parents may wish to send their child to an international school with a focus on multicultural and multilingual educational opportunities.

Parents know best what type of school is most appropriate for their child's educational, emotional, and developmental needs. Aligning Colorado law with the new federal law in the area of 529 plans will empower parents to make the best individual educational decisions for their individual children without minimizing the importance of supporting public education. Just as children from the same family are not all the same, their educational needs may not be the same either. While public schools successfully meet the needs of a majority of children, they may not meet the needs of every family or every child within the same family. Opening 529 plans to K-12 tuition would give parents greater liberty to customize their child's education in order to meet their individual needs and maximize their scholastic accomplishments. Please vote yes on HB19-1123.

Respectfully,

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February 19, 2019

To Members of Colorado State Assembly  
& the House Education Committee,

First we'd like to thank Representative Colin Larson for sponsoring HB19-1123. This letter is to urge you and other members of the House Education Committee to vote in favor of HB19-1123.

It is critical to support parents' right to choose educational path suited to their own children. This bill is another step to allow our community to use their *own* after-tax contributions into a 529 plan toward qualifying educational expenses - including K12 education.

It is crucial that Colorado law honors the federal Tax Cuts and Job Acts law by passing HB19-1123 which will then align the federal and state laws in the matter of using 529 funds for K12 education.

There should *never* be a tax-recapture clause or any penalties whatsoever if a family were to choose to use 529 funding for K12 education. The prospect of a penalty for doing with the federal law allows is absurd.

Please vote in favor of HB-1123 which in turn validates our freedom in America and supports the principles of a free-market economy.

Respectfully,

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Thursday, February 14, 2019  
Eric Strassburger  
3574 South Hudson Street  
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To Whom It May Concern,

Hello Madame Chair and members of the committee my name is Eric Strassburger and I am here today representing myself and my family to voice my support for HB 1123.

My wife and I struggled with a miscarriage and trying unsuccessfully to get pregnant over 3.5 years. We felt like we won the lottery when we gave birth to our first daughter (Cosette) and then twin girls (Adalay and Harlyn) a year and a half later. Now we feel like we are literally going to have to win the lottery to cover the costs of sending them to our home parish of Most Precious Blood and my alma matter of Regis Jesuit High School that would total roughly \$338,250 using today's tuition rates. Catholic education has been a priority for my family for generations, and I too am trying to shoulder the necessary financial burdens like my parents and grandparents before me. We setup multiple 529 plans using gifts from their baptisms but we are feeling the pinch with Denver's high cost of living like many other middle-class families.

As a result, I was very pleased when I found out that the federal tax reform bill expanded 529 plans to include K-12 educational expenses. This expansion offers a new avenue for my family to save and utilize pre-tax dollars to potentially pay for K-12 private school tuition for our daughters. As you know Colorado is one of a handful of states that must adopt legislation in order for my family, and so many other families like mine, to have the same 529 state tax benefits for K-12 educational use that I currently have for college savings and use.

It is my hope that Colorado will do the right thing by allowing a family like mine the power and flexibility to use the money in our 529 account to determine what is in the best educational interests of our children, not just when it comes to college, but also regarding K-12 education. The ability to invest in my children's future by choosing a school that best meets their current needs and adequately prepares them for college will pay dividends in the future.

Aligning Colorado law to mirror what the federal government has allowed for regarding 529 accounts is exactly why I support HB 1123 and I respectfully ask that you support HB 1123.

Sincerely,

Eric Strassburger