



## ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

October 19, 2015

Dear Speaker Boehner,

As the House votes on the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act of 2015 (H.R. 10) this week, I write to thank you for your constant support of the Opportunity Scholarship Program. As you know, its reauthorization is essential to improving educational opportunities especially for low-income families in the District of Columbia.

Eleven years ago, city and federal leaders, working with local business and education leaders including the Archdiocese of Washington, pioneered a new approach to strengthen educational opportunities for children across the District of Columbia. With a commitment to putting the well-being of children first, Congress approved a three-sector initiative: new funds for public and charter schools and scholarships for low-income families to select the school that best meets their children's needs.

Today, we see the fruits of this innovative partnership: improving public schools, effective charter schools and a highly popular and successful Opportunity Scholarship Program.

As Archbishop of Washington, I have seen first-hand many positive outcomes. The 664 children now attending our schools through the Opportunity Scholarship Program are thriving not to mention numerous children who participated in the program almost all of whom are now attending college or beginning their professional careers. Our experience and studies show parents are not only engaged in their children's education, but are very satisfied. The average income for a scholarship family is about \$22,000 so this program serves the poorest of the poor. Four families apply for every scholarship made available.

The Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act is a leap forward for all the children of the District of Columbia. Indeed, it is by working together that we are able to give children a path out of poverty through educational equality. This is a matter of fairness and justice.

With gratitude for your commitment to the children of the District of Columbia, I am

Faithfully yours,

Archbishop of Washington

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515