



# News Release

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## **Benevolent Tax Credit Bills Pass House and Senate**

March 14, 2013 JEFFERSON CITY, MO – Tax credits benefitting thousands of Missourians have been restored with the passage of Senate Bills 20, 19 and 15 by the Missouri General Assembly.

On Wednesday, March 13, the Missouri General Assembly voted to pass the benevolent tax credit legislation sponsored by Senator Bob Dixon (R-Springfield).

The Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) encouraged the passage of this bill by testifying in hearings and speaking with legislators on both sides of the aisle.

“With this bill, we tap the strong charitable spirit of Missourians to drive local efforts to help Missouri’s neediest citizens,” Senator Dixon said. “It encourages individuals to give locally and support their friends and neighbors who are on the front lines helping others.”

The bill re-establishes expired tax credits that people can claim when donating to pregnancy resource centers, food pantries and services to children in crisis organizations.

There are 56 pregnancy resource centers in Missouri. The centers assist women with unplanned or crisis pregnancies and encourage women to carry their pregnancies to term by offering pregnancy testing and counseling with emotional and material support. Pregnancy resource centers provide cost-free, client services at the facility, as opposed to merely providing counseling or referral services by telephone.

When the tax credits expired on August 27, 2012, centers began to notice a drop in donations. Many encouraged donations before the credits expired, and while they may have seen an increase in donations before then, they have since dropped. Birthright Counseling of St. Louis reported a 13 percent drop in donations from the same time period in 2011.

“In these difficult economic times, people need help. Mothers need help and encouragement to bring their unborn children into the world, and parents need help feeding their children,” Tyler McClay, general counsel for the MCC, said.

The restoration of these credits will help prompt donations, thus helping thousands of people across the state.

Representative John McCaherty (R-High Ridge) voted to pass the legislation, that he said allowed private citizens to donate their money helping groups they chose, while also saving the state money.

“I think our benevolent tax credits are vital for our communities and state. For the pregnancy resource centers, food banks and child in crisis centers, all of them need the help and help people that would be turning to the state for help, did they not exist.”

The Public Safety Officer Surviving Spouse Tax Credit, Children in Crisis Tax Credit – now called the Champion for Children Tax Credit – and the Residential Dwelling Accessibility Tax Credit were also restored.

This bill would extend most of these tax credits until December 31, 2019, and will also make contributions made after January 1, 2013, eligible for tax credits. The bill also contains an emergency clause, making it effective as soon as it is signed by Governor Jay Nixon.