



# NEWS RELEASE

**Arizona House of Representatives**

**Majority Leader Ben Toma (R-22)**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Arizona's Universal ESA Law Moves Forward, Providing School Choice to All K-12 Families

**STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX** – House Republican Majority Leader Ben Toma today responded to the apparent failure by opponents of school choice to gather the minimum number of signatures required to force a referendum of [HB 2853](#). Toma sponsored the new law which expands eligibility for Arizona's Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) program to every family in Arizona, delivering educational freedom to parents of more than 1.1 million students.

**“Chalk up another major victory for Arizona families wanting the freedom to choose the education that best meets their child's needs. School choice is increasingly popular with Arizona parents, especially those whose children are stuck in a failing school, so I find it baffling that anyone would try so hard to take that choice away from parents. It's good that they have apparently failed.**

**“Proponents of the failed referendum built their effort on the fallacy that public schools are harmed by Arizona's ESA program. That of course is untrue. In Arizona, we have seen that when funding follows the student, the performance of schools and students has improved. Moreover, the dramatic increase in K-12 education funding led by the Republican Legislature in the last several years demonstrates our commitment to all schools and, in turn, we expect them to continue to serve and improve the academic achievement of Arizona's students.”**

Under the new law, parents who apply for Arizona's ESA program may direct roughly \$7,000 per year, per child, to expenses like private school tuition, homeschooling expenses, educational therapies, and tutoring in exchange for not attending a public school or receiving a tuition tax credit scholarship.

*Ben Toma is the Republican Majority Leader for the Arizona House of Representatives and serves Legislative District 22, which includes Surprise, Sun City West, Peoria, and Glendale. Follow him on Twitter at @RepBenToma.*

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