

Testimony SB 241 Sheryl Roberts

Good morning Chairwoman Lehner, Vice Chair Huffman, ranking member Sykes and members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Sheryl Roberts. I am currently the Director of Advancement and Admissions at Lake Center Christian School after serving for 15 years as Elementary Principal.

Lake Center Christian School is located in Hartville between Akron and Canton, Ohio. The school recently celebrated 70 years of service to students and their families. Our enrollment for 2017-2018 is 625 students in preschool through 12th grade.

Our student body represents a diverse ethnic and socioeconomic population located in Stark, Summit, and Portage County area. Lake Center Christian School offers programs for students with special learning needs with ten percent of our population participating in the Jon Peterson Scholarship Program. We are also an EdChoice provider with fifteen percent of our students on that scholarship. Twenty one percent of our students are identified as gifted by state standards.

Lake Center Christian School holds dual accreditation with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and AdvanED. First accredited in 2002, our most recent rigorous accreditation cycle was completed in 2017.

Lake Center Christian School is in favor of an accreditation process for nonpublic schools. We however ask each of you to refrain from supporting the SB 241. I am asking that a series of interested party hearings be held to allow all five of the state approved accrediting associations be represented in this pilot program.

We agree that accreditation assists school improvement in systematic way. We do not agree that the Independent Schools Association of the Central States is the best or only accreditation organization that should be considered for setting the standard for nonpublic schools in Ohio.

We suggest that a valid accreditation will do the following:*

- It documents that the school is true to its own foundational statements (mission, vision, core values, goals)
- It affirms that the school meets standards of quality established by the school community
- It provides validation of the credibility of the school through a peer review process
- It promotes accountability to the school community
- It improves instruction targeting increased student achievement
- It promotes ongoing instructional improvement through a continuous process of self-assessment and systematic school development
- It transfers credits between schools and between the nation's school systems

The U.S. Department of Education recognizes ACSI accreditation for their Student and Exchange Visitor Program, the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, and I-20 and I-17 forms. ACSI has various U.S. state, national, and international recognitions. ACSI has endorsement to administer College Board/ACT exams on school sites.

The Association of Christian Schools International is eligible for joint accreditation status with the following: AdvancEd (North Central Association, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Association of Colleges & Schools), New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Middle States Association (Elementary and/or Secondary), and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Therefore, it is my opinion that if the Independent Schools Association of the Central States is listed as an accrediting body for nonpublic schools, the Association of Christian Schools International and the other state approved accreditation organizations should also to be listed as equally valid for assessment and accreditation of nonpublic school education in the state of Ohio.

Chairwoman Lehner and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify as an opponent of SB 241.

At this time, I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

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*Adapted from the Association of Christian Schools International website: <https://www.acsi.org/>