

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and Honorable Members of the Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 339, which would establish the Nonchartered Educational Savings Account Program.

My name is Janine King. I reside in Powell, Ohio. I have three children, one child who graduated from public high school, one still in public high school, and one we moved from public to parochial during Covid and now to a non-chartered, non-public school.

I would like to begin my testimony today with the words of two great religious leaders.

Pope Paul VI stated "Parents who have the primary and inalienable right and duty to educate their children must enjoy true liberty in their choice of schools." and in the words of St. John Paul II, "All men and women - and all children - have a right to education. Closely linked to this right to education is the right of parents, of families, to choose according to their convictions the kind of education and the model of school which they wish for their children"

It is my fervent belief, first as a Christian and second as a parent, that it is my duty and my right to choose the educational institution that I desire for my children. As I mentioned at the beginning of my testimony, we were in public and moved to parochial, neither of these institutions provided the type of education, community, or values we desired for our children. Unfortunately, for my older two children, we did not have the option of a non-chartered non-public classical school for their education, but for my youngest, this is my deepest desire.

The type of education that I desire for my child should not put undue financial burden on my family or any other family simply because the school does not accept funding from the state.

The expansion of EdChoice, albeit a great start in moving towards Universal School Choice, did not include non-chartered non-public schools, thus leaving out a very important segment of the population and thousands of children whose parents deeply desire this type of education, but could never afford the cost to send their child.

As parents or grandparents, as I am sure some of you are, do you not desire the freedom to choose education that aligns with your deepest hopes, dreams, and desires for them? The education of a child is one of the most important things you can provide to ensure they succeed in life. Parents should have the right to determine where and how this education happens.

I urge you to PASS House Bill 339 as it is currently written, to establish the Nonchartered Educational Savings Account Program.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 339. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.