

HB 339 Proponent Testimony

Giana Rudolph

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Greeting Chair Bird, Vice-Chair Fowler-Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Ed Committee, my name is Giana Rudolph. I in Lima, Ohio, and I am a ninth grader at the Lima Christian Academy, a non-public non-chartered school in Lima.

While I don't understand a lot of things regarding the state chartering of schools, I do appreciate my school and appreciate what they and my family have taught me that "all men [and women, boys and girls] are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"—and it makes me happy to attend the Lima Christian Academy!

I am here testifying today regarding HB 339. HB 339 would take great financial pressure off my parents who are giving themselves to plant a church in Lima to reach people not currently being reached. My church-planting pastor-dad had to take a second job this past year to pay bills and this cleaning job has taken a great amount of time and energy away from his primary calling of reaching the neediest in Lima. (My mom also has had to take a job for the same reason.) My parents believe that the non-chartered LCA is the best place in Lima for their two daughters to receive their education, so I am asking you to support HB 339, to create Non-chartered Education Savings Accounts.

You may be asking, "Why don't you just go chartered?" Well, at my school we believe in the separation of church and state and that true education has to do with the fear of the Lord. In school we have studied John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, and he spent twelve years in jail for refusing to take a license to preach. We would see education as dealing with truth, knowledge, values, what is real, where did everything come from, and so on—very much religious in nature, and that in principle it is not right for parents or church-schools to receive a charter (which is a license, a permission) to teach.

Right now my parents' money is being directed to public schools, so children can go there for free. This should be the same for Christian Schools who are made up of people who believe there is a principle of true separation of church and state involved in education. People want their children to have good education and at our school you can have a great education; but sometimes this option is not affordable because of the tuition the parents have to pay and it is not always the easiest or most affordable choice. We are here today because we want House Bill 339 to be passed, because my parents want me to be able to keep going to our non-chartered Christian school. Please support HB 339!

Thank you,
Giana Rudolph