

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 445. My name is Elizabeth Easton and I am from Franklin County.

I would like to share why I am in support of passing HB 445.

I live in Upper Arlington, Oh and I was on the steering committee and am now currently on the board for LifeWise Academy in Upper Arlington. LifeWise (LW) is a Bible Education program for public school students that occurs during school hours. We are privately funded, 100% voluntary, and our classes are off of school grounds. We have a great relationship with our school administration and have not had any issues since we launched in the fall of 2022. We started with one elementary school in 2022 and this year we are in all 5 elementary schools, both middle schools and are starting at our High School.

I believe that giving the choice to parents and students to participate in a religious education and or prayer program is very important. Whatever their religion, students should have the opportunity to practice their religion during the school day if they so choose.

Upper Arlington has seen an improvement in behavior from students in the classroom since LW launched in UA schools. The kids get to learn the Gospel, pray, fellowship with other students and have fun. For many kids, it is the highlight of their week!

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to advocate for House Bill 445.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Easton