

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 Kathilynn Cochran and I am from Morrow County.

I am involved in our local community's LifeWise Academy, which is a released time religious instruction program, and am also a retired Elementary School Teacher. Our school administration is in favor of the LifeWise program and is working with our LifeWise group as we begin our released time program for the 2024-2025 school year. Because of my involvement with local families, I am aware that many parents are in favor of moral and character education, but are not in a position to homeschool or send their children to a Christian School. This released-time program makes religious education during the school day available to those families.

Currently, schools can veto parent's access to a released time program. HB 445 gives the option to all parents and to all religions. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to advocate for House Bill 445.

Sincerely,

Kathilynn Cochran