

“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 Larry A Schirm, and I am from Hocking County.” I am adding my voice to focusing on the importance of parent having the opportunity to choose released time for religious instruction. Currently”:

Current Problem

Ohio law (ORC 3313.6022) currently allows for released time religious classes for public school students. However, under the current law, school officials can veto parents, denying students access.

HB 445 Solution

The HB 445 amendment, will change a single word from “may” to “shall” so that all school districts will adopt a released time policy, giving parents, not schools, the ultimate choice of whether to provide religious instruction for their children.

I am a grandfather of 6 youngsters in public schools and 4 others that have graduated onto college and beyond.

The elder 4 had to remove themselves from public education to receive time in their day for religious instruction.

The younger 6 are soon facing similar choices under current language where there is power to disavow time in their academic day for religious instruction.

Freedom of choice, hardly. Our freedoms have continually been eroded and this is a prime example of such. Please allow such freedom.

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

Larry A Schirm