

HB 445 Proponent Testimony
Robert Eberly

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 Robert Eberly and I reside in Portage County here in Ohio.

As I understand it, Ohio law currently allows for released time religious classes for public school students during the normal hours in which schools are currently meeting, and not out of the classroom time schedule before or after those normal hours. I also understand, that under that same current law, school officials can veto the wishes of parents, denying students access to these religious classes. This I find unconscionable and frankly offensive.

Our local School Board has stated that it is difficult enough to orchestrate the school day with the current educational requirements without having to build into the school day a time slot to fulfill this additional ask. I find this position interesting and amusing seeing that they have found time for the grooming and discipling of our children on subjects that range far from what would be considered acceptable academic courses of study. Our children are indoctrinated far too much on cultural issues outside of the classroom to make this current intrusion under the guise of education acceptable.

If parents want religious studies offered on a voluntary basis, then the schools should comply. We are seeing too many progressives taking over school boards and manipulating the curriculums of our schools to meet their ideologies. We the parents and taxpayers should have a say in what we feel should be the outcome goals for our children's education.

I recently read where Richard Dawkins has changed his religious convictions from atheist to Cultural Christian. He stated that the reason for his change in position is that he rather enjoyed living in a society that is shaped by the moral values of Christianity. Christian values helped shape the order that provides those liberties that we all enjoy. Instruction in those values is what will best support the fabric of our society as it has for the past nearly 250 years. Allowing religious education for our children is good for them and for the world in which they live. I ask you to change the "may" to "shall" in the current law. I ask you to vote in support of HB445.

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

Sincerely,

Robert Eberly