

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 11/7/24

Name: Kate Lindon

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): _____

Position/Title: _____

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 445

Specific Issue: Mandated release time for religious instruction

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? Zero, written testimony is below

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

I am appalled by House Bill 445 which would mandate release team for religious instruction in our Ohio public schools. Let the local schools decide if they want to allow it by keeping the language as-is. Keep local control! I don't believe any private interest group should be allowed to check kids out during the school day. It could become a slippery slope of having to allow other groups the same option. The schools' finely tuned academic schedule should not be disrupted for ANY private group. No matter what time of day it is, it will also be a strain on the office staff to check kids in and out. I have also heard from parents at other schools that groups such as LifeWise starts with lunch/recess time, then try to be considered a "special" to accommodate more students which would take away from gym/art/music time. (I'm reminded of a favorite children's book "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie") I have also read reports of LifeWise student attendees being incentivized with prizes and candy to recruit other students during the day, which would be inappropriate promotion. These students should not be proselytizing other students. If parents want their children to have religious instruction, this should happen OUTSIDE of school hours. Please don't allow this group or others to have access during the school day, there's no reason for that disruption and all the questionable practices that could follow. Thank you for advocating for our children, our schools, and local control!

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.