

Opponent Testimony for HB 445

Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee

November 12, 2024

Testimony from: Jeffrey R. Lee, MA in Philosophy, BS (Physics major),
former Evangelical Christian (20+ years),
present day independent scholar with focuses on the Bible and Fundamentalism.
Medina County Resident.

Chair Gayle Manning, Vice Chair Sarah Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Phil Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Jeffrey R. Lee. I am a resident of Medina County, a former Evangelical Christian who de-converted after twenty-some years as a true-believer via an introduction to Critical Thinking and subsequently earning a Masters of Arts in Philosophy in 2003 at Cleveland State University. Over the past few years in an attempt to cover all the bases I have spent many hundreds of hours reading and studying Bibles and other associated materials written by non-believers and believers, scholarly and popular.

As an individual who has been on the inside of Evangelical Christianity, then deprogrammed via higher-education, and has been doing the serious research to thoroughly grasp this thing called Evangelical Christianity, I am writing to oppose HB 445 and ask that it be permanently removed from the committee agenda.

Whilst others may lament the loss of time to secular class room instruction I know the impact is much greater than that as core to Evangelical Christian belief is that Salvation (what they call their conversion experience) is the only thing that matters for an individual in this life. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36 (KJV) I don't think those who haven't been in the in group of Evangelical Christians have an adequate appreciation for how this works out in the believer, they may be aware of the animus against evolutionary biology, but for the true-believer there is an overarching disdain of secular education in general as it does not lead to the conversion of souls.

Evangelical Christianity is viral in nature. The first thing the new convert learns is that they must convert others. The interesting thing is that one can learn everything there is to know about how to convert others in a matter of minutes. The interest in their church services is not religious instruction, but the boosting of conversion and if the Evangelical Christians are true to their faith this is what they will have in mind in their so-called religious instruction periods granted by RTRI rather than religious instruction.

I ask that you please consider this testimony from a concerned Ohio scholar and vote no on HB445.

Thank you for considering this testimony.