

November 15, 2024

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 293. My name is David Cuthbert and I am from Franklin County.

Senate Bill 293 is very important for parents who would like to allow release time from school to provide a Moral and Religious Education for their children and there is strong demand for this in our state and in fact release time is being utilized in more than 200 districts in Ohio.

Unfortunately Parental Rights in choosing this education for their children is under threat due to the lack of state-wide consistency in allowing this program. School districts are able to restrict parental rights due to pressure from others whose rights are not being infringed.

The bill doesn't require any child or parent to use the release time but does require the school districts to allow parents to decide if this instruction is part of their child's education. In summary, the core purpose of the bill is to establish statewide consistency in allowing parents to access release time for moral and religious education, while preserving the choice for those who do not wish to use it.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to advocate for Senate Bill 293.

Sincerely,

David Cuthbert