

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 Kelly Sell and I am from Wood County.

Research shows that students with involved parents tend to perform better academically, have higher attendance rates and exhibit more positive attitudes toward school. I feel that parents should have the authority to decide if religious education is part of their children's schooling. It's fully optional, so those who don't want to choose this option, that is completely fair.

In today's world, parents' rights are under threat. This has caused students to not be in control of their child, under the age of 18, leading to poor decision making, lower self-esteem, and academic issues with these students.

Nationwide, parents in hundreds of districts have now advocated for released time programs. They have seen the benefits of supporting moral and character-building curriculum, being a parent myself I have witnessed it with my 4th grader last year. For the first time he was excited and looking forward to going to school so he can experience his Religious Education class. Learning the basics of being respectful, having integrity, and kindness really showed towards his classmates throughout the rest of the school year.

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

Sincerely,

Kelly Sell