

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 Kathy Goecke and I am from Allen County. Parents, not school administrators should have the choice to allow their child to receive Bible-based character education during school hours.

I have been on the LifeWise start-up Board at Spencerville where I also received LifeWise updates from those coordinating efforts for other schools in Allen County. I have volunteered in the Lifewise classroom. There has never been a push for a religious denomination, just voluntary Bible-based character education. No one would have an issue if the character training were based on other historical books and figures like Freud or Dr. Spock.

There is a lot of expensive teacher training lately like Ervin Educational Training and PBIS, both are behavioral intervention and school safety support training. Perhaps this would not be needed if the building block of society, the family, was allowed the freedom of religion as opposed to freedom from religion. Our founding Father John Adams stated, "Our Constitution was made for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other". The Government cannot establish a religion but must protect the free exercise thereof. Public schools allow LGBTQ and transgender ideology in school without parental notice, but some schools will not allow Bible-based character education.

The law already exists that schools 'may' allow for religious education during school hours if it is off school grounds, parent-approved, and privately funded. It needs to be changed from 'may' to 'shall' so that administrators cannot take rights away from parents.

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

Sincerely,  
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