

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 Adam Burkey and I am from Licking County.

I support passing House Bill 445 because I believe all children, including my own, should have the opportunity to benefit from RTRI. I don't think the school board should have the authority to prevent the community from exercising its rights under RTRI laws during school hours. RTRI is valuable for the community, supports our schools, and most importantly, helps teach children strong character values.

I speak from experience when I say that RTRI programs like LifeWise can have a positive impact. I've had the privilege of helping lead LifeWise meetings in the past, and I've seen firsthand how these programs engage children and help them develop important life skills. Through my involvement, I've witnessed how students grow in character, understanding, and empathy—qualities that will serve them well both in school and beyond. What's more, RTRI programs are free, valuable, and 100% optional. Families have the choice to opt in or out, so there is no reason to let school boards ban them. If parents or students aren't interested, they can simply choose not to participate, but for those who do, the benefits are undeniable. This flexibility makes RTRI an opportunity, not a requirement, and that's why I believe every child should have access to this enriching experience.

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

Sincerely,

Adam L Burkey
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