

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 Jeanne Willson and I am from Williams County.

I feel it is very important that parents have an opportunity to choose released time religious instruction. As a former student many, many years ago, I was able to participate in this program in Lucas County, Toledo, Ohio. It helped me to better understand what I was also being taught at my own church. I had some friends who did not attend church, yet they were able to hear and learn about what the Bible taught and have used the same basic principles in their life.

Recently I have noticed, since I retired as a teacher and now serve as a volunteer with the local LifeWise classes in Montpelier, Ohio, that children who attend are learning concepts associated with the Bible such as, responsibility, patience, Understanding, and forgiveness, just to name a few of the many. Topics. These basic concepts benefit all people in our society as we relate toward one another and work together.

Parents should have the right to choose if their child attends these classes. Parents are responsible for their children's upbringing. Our children need to know who God is. These are important reasons of why Ohio needs SB293. Afterall, we are 'One Nation Under God' when we say the pledge of allegiance to our country and have "In God We Trust" on our money when we purchase goods and items.

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

Sincerely,

Jeanne Willson