

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 Stephanie Noel and I am from Montgomery County.

I would like to share my testimony of why parents should have the opportunity to choose released time religious instruction for their children. In 1982, in Covington, KY, as a 2nd grader, I was given the opportunity to take advantage of the Released Time Biblical Instruction that was available at my elementary school. My mom signed a form for me to go off school property like a field trip once a week. My 2nd grade class and I would walk from my elementary school to the little Christ Church on the corner to learn about Jesus for less than an hour. That was my first introduction to God and what a church is.

As I was growing up, I did not realize that a seed was planted so long ago and how much that would impact my life today. I grew up in a broken home with parents who did not believe in God but I knew from learning in that short amount of time in the released time religious instruction that there is a REAL God and I could pray to Him. It is so important to continue to have this option for parents so the next generation can have the choice to choose God and know He is there for all of us. Today, I work for a church full time and serve our community as much as I possibly can to invite people to be transformed by Jesus.

Parents, not school administrators, should have the ultimate choice as to whether their children attend Bible education classes during school hours. Choices and opportunities like Released Time Biblical Instruction can be life changing for our children!

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

Sincerely,

Stephanie Noel