

Dear 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 Doyle Pertuset and I am from Licking County.

In February of 2021 I was introduced to Released Time Religious Instruction with Lifewise Academy where the parents could decide to let their children receive a Character education based on the Bible and learn about God, Jesus and the Bible. Something that has been missing for our children for years. Because the children of our world today are required to be at the ballfields every Sunday.

I was fortunate that within 3 months after we agreed to be a part of the Lifewise Lakewood program we received 250 signatures of the 200 that was required before talking to our superintendent. After some thought and checking with his lawyer our superintendent said yes. We started our classes January 2022 and we watched young lives change from no hope to a bright future. We started with 11 students and today we have over 200.

I was asked by community members to help form a Lifewise programs in the school district around us. And time and again I've seen signatures of up to 500 parents that wanted their children to have the same opportunity as our students had in our school district. And they were denied the freedom to choose the education they wanted for their own children by their superintendent and/or school board. I've seen parents and children cry, because they are denied the freedom of choice. Parents are being told no for the hope of a better future for their children. Parents with the dream of building a better community, a better school district, a brighter tomorrow for Ohio, are being told no. Parents has the freedom to allow their children to play football, be in the band, and many other educational opportunities for what the parents wants for their children, why not freedom to choose Released Time Religious Instruction program?

Please for the children and the parents of all Ohio school districts, give them the freedom of choice. We ask you to support Senate Bill 293.

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

Sincerely

Doyle Pertuset

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