

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Karen Pinsky. I am a resident (lifelong) of Ohio, a mom, grandma, retired pediatric nurse.

I am strongly opposed to SB 293 and its House counterpart HB 445. In fact, I am strongly opposed to any bill/law that attempts to put religious training as part of a public school day. As it is the day is short, the studies many and the distractions limitless. When students are distracted from their coursework it can take twice the time...or longer..to get them back on track. Already our students lag behind many other countries.

Of course, a main objection is that religious training and public school education have no place being linked. In my opinion this bill starts a slippery slope that will lead to religion being taught in public schools, which opens the whole can of worms as to whose religion is included, whose religion is excluded, what about those who are agnostic, atheist, or part of a lesser accepted religion.

If a parent wishes for their child to have religious training as part of their school day, there are faith based schools that will nicely meet that need. It should not be any part of or distraction from the public school day.

I understand that some special circumstances may pop up making it necessary for a parent to pick up a child a few minutes early to get to an appointment, even perhaps a religious class but leaving a few minutes early once a week is quite different than being pulled from public school during the day for a religious education. There is no need for a bill mandating this special circumstance ...it is treated like any other appointment.

Thank you

Karen Pinsky