

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 Madison Menich. I am the mother of a vibrant, smart, and curious 1 year old boy. I am strongly opposed to SB 293 and its House counterpart HB 445.

I am strongly against this bill because I believe in the separation of church and state. I do not want my tax dollars to go to schools who allow religious education in or outside of the classroom. My son should have the freedom to seek out religious life completely separately from his education. While programs like LifeWise might be voluntary, they have sneaky ways of incentivizing participation that would be confusing or alienating for children who might not want to participate.

I am also very opposed to the lack of safety and training requirements for these programs. I do not feel comfortable sending my son to any public schools in Ohio that allow these programs - or are FORCED to allow these programs to disintegrate the boundaries between church and state.

Please, keep religion out of schools and vote NO on SB 293.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this unAmerican bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.