

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

My name is Pastor Evan Cameron. I'm ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and I serve a church in north Columbus called Lord of Life Lutheran Church. This is my second year here, but my 9th year as a pastor. I am also the dad of two sons (ages 5 and 1). We live just inside the Worthington school district bounds.

I am strongly opposed to SB 293 and its House counterpart HB 445.

I believe strongly in the values of the Christian tradition - the primary of them being "love of neighbor." It is this value that drives my opposition to these bills. I feel they will create division between students, possibly even adding more enmity between students of different faiths.

Most importantly, I feel it is an issue of child safety. Few things in history have done more harm than bad theology, including theology that might encourage students to judge others, or wrongly inspire them to "save" their peers instead of just learning together. I fear for the hatred that may come for the agnostic or atheist student, all because others want to co-opt something designed as a tool for families whose religious holidays are not observed by a more universal calendar.

In that spirit, I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this dangerous bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to write.

In peace -
Rev. Evan Cameron
Pastor, Lord of Life Lutheran Church
2480 W. Dublin-Granville Rd
Columbus, Ohio 43235