

November 18, 2024

The Honorable Andrew O. Brenner  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor 140  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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 Leslie Dybiec. I am a lifetime resident of Ohio and an advocate for high quality public education. I am strongly opposed to SB 293 and its House counterpart HB 445.

The choice to attend a non-public school already exists. If parents want their child to have access to religious education during their school day, it is available to them.

**Roughly 80 percent of Ohio students attend traditional public school districts, while more than 110,000 students attend charter schools and more than 200,000 students attend non-public schools or homeschool.**

(<https://www.ohiobythenumbers.com/>)

Public school education was not intended to serve as religious education. The US Constitution is supposed to ensure a separation of church and state. Therefore, dedicating time to religious practice, at Ohio taxpayer's expense, and at the expense of teaching Ohio's curriculum, has no place in public schools.

In addition, removing children from their school during the school day is disruptive to teaching and learning. The school day is not a long one. Teachers and students need all the time they currently have to dedicate to the curriculum, as evidenced by Ohio's less-than-stellar student achievement scores.

**Approximately 30 to 40 percent of Ohio students reach the national standard for proficiency.** (<https://www.ohiobythenumbers.com/>)

Interrupting instruction in an environment that already demands a lot from teachers, parents, students, support staff, etc. will not help improve Ohio public education.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on these anti-education bills. Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Leslie Dybiec