

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 Ian Lake and I am from Muskingum County.

I am confident in this governing body's commitment to ensuring the parental rights of its constituents are protected, even empowered, as new opportunities are presented in which those rights can be enacted. As it relates to the S.B. 293 concerning Released Time Religious Instruction in public schools, I am confident that the Senate recognizes its responsibility to support the families of Ohio's communities.

Our public schools provide our students invaluable learning opportunities and the landscape of those opportunities continues to broaden. In light of these growing opportunities and the evident need in our society for the development of character education programs, I implore you to consider the value being brought to our public schools and local communities through LifeWise Academy.

LifeWise Academy is faith-based and this alone is an attractive component for many families. However, its character focus is something to be desired by all. This program has had immediate impact in the public school system, namely improvements in behavior and attendance. We know that exposure is influence and it is my firm belief that the early improvements that have resulted from the exposure this program provides will continue to multiply.

The influence of this program will result in better citizens, supplying the future of our local communities with a caring community, a well-rounded workforce, and solution oriented thinkers who desire to positively impact their communities and meet the needs of their neighbors.

Please consider these simplified thoughts as you hear today's arguments. It is my belief that this is an item that should receive bipartisan support as its impact is positive for all.

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

Sincerely,

Ian Lake