

Opponent Testimony for S.B. 293
Ohio Senate Education Committee

November 19, 2024

Dear Chair Andrew Brenner, Vice Chair Sandra O'Brien, Ranking Member Catherine Ingram, and Esteemed Senate Education Committee Members Louis Blessing, III, Stephen Huffman, Michele Reynolds, and Vernon Sykes:

Thank you for reading my testimony today. My name is Brett Mullins. I am an ordained minister, father and supporter of public education. I am testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 293, which seeks to alter the well-established system of Released Time Religious Instruction (RTRI) by changing the permissive "may" to "shall" in Section [3313.6022](#) of the Ohio Revised Code. I believe this unnecessary bill threatens the autonomy of local school boards and undermines constitutional principles.

For the past decade, RTRI programs have operated without significant issues under the current law, and for 80 years before that. This balanced approach has allowed parents who wish for their children to participate in religious instruction the opportunity to do so while maintaining the integrity of public education. There is no evidence of systemic issues requiring legislative correction. The success of the existing RTRI framework demonstrates that the proposed changes are unnecessary, which is evident by the fact that according to [School Ministries Ohio](#), over 60% of all districts have a policy.

In summary, SB 293 is an unnecessary and potentially harmful piece of legislation. It threatens local control, violates constitutional principles, and risks undermining the quality of education in Ohio's public schools. I urge you to protect the integrity of our education system and oppose SB 293. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Respectfully,
Brett Mullins