

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

November 15, 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 allowing me to submit this testimony. My name is Lisa Sabo she/her. I am a former teacher, Parent and Grandparent; a lifelong resident of central Ohio . I am testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 293, to express my opposition to SB 293, which seeks to alter the well-established system of 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. I urge you to oppose this legislation for several key reasons.

As a teacher I witnessed the impact of non core curriculum on the wellbeing and happiness of students. I taught Family and Consumer Science for eight years and my curriculum tied in to the state academic standards for sixth, seventh and eighth grade. Practical applications of these standards assisted in raising the standardized test scores. I am concerned students that miss non core classes are also missing out on practical academic skills.

As a Parent and Grandparent it is my responsibility to teach my children about religion. School should be free from this influence as a separation of church and state. Students have the opportunity to learn outside the school day.

The U.S. Supreme Court's rulings in [Zorach v. Clauson](#) and [McCullum v. Board of Education](#) highlight the dangers of religious entanglement in public education and underscore the importance of schools maintaining neutrality toward religion. The entanglement between public education and religious instruction is dangerous. It also undermines the secular purpose of public schooling. The courts have repeatedly affirmed that public schools must remain neutral on religious matters, ensuring that students are free from coercion or implied endorsement of any religious beliefs.

Moreover, McCollum in particular emphasized that state-sponsored religious programs that occur within public school systems can create an appearance of endorsement, which is unconstitutional. Forcing schools to accommodate RTRI in a mandatory way risks crossing this line, creating legal vulnerabilities for districts statewide.

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.

Respectfully,

Lisa Sabo