

To whom it may concern,

I strongly oppose Ohio House Bill 486. As A former history teacher, it is not accurate to say that Christianity's impact on American Society has been solely positive. Christianity is rooted in patriarchy, which is inherently sexist. Beyond the negative impact that Christianity has had on women (who make up over 50% of the American Population) it has been responsible for the persecution of LGBTQ people. Christian rhetoric is rife with disdain for the LGBTQ community and has been directly responsible for denying their human rights and encouraging violence against them. Christianity is also responsible for the genocide which the United States of America was born out of. Early Christians to this continent believed themselves superior to native people and set about killing them off and taking their land. Forcing teachers to expound on the positive impact of Christianity is an affront to all of the groups of people who have been hurt by this religion. It is historically inaccurate, and it is a farce. This is not to say that Christianity has not had positive impacts, but that its negative impacts must also be acknowledged.

Beyond the issue of historical inaccuracy, HB 486 is unconstitutional. The First Amendment protects teachers' freedom of speech. You cannot force them to tell their students lies or half truths. The First Amendment also prohibits the government from establishing a religion. Our public schools are schools for everyone, not just Christians. It is illegal for our government to promote the Christian religion in our public schools. To speak only of the virtues of a religion and deny any of its vices is nothing more than shameless promotion. It is unconstitutional, and it is morally repugnant.

To reiterate, I vehemently oppose HB 486 because it promotes historical inaccuracies in our public schools and is unconstitutional on multiple levels. This bill would promote indoctrination not education.

Nikki De Mars