

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Brennan, and members of the Ohio Education Committee; thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony for HB 486.

House Bill 486 provides important clarification and protection for educators seeking to teach their students about the incredible significance that religion, namely Christianity, has held throughout history. It is my opinion that the story of American history cannot be truly told without discussing the importance that Christianity has had on the history of our incredible Nation, from early colonial settlers using their faith as a centerpiece of their communities, to the irrefutable impact of both the first and second Great Awakenings. From the religious foundations of the Mayflower compact to the Christian values that set the tone for the Civil Rights Movement, attempting to tell the story of America without discussing faith is akin to putting together a puzzle while missing dozens of pieces.

Secondly, it is important to remember that the bill does not create any new mandates, but instead seeks to simply clarify that the inclusion of important topics, including but not limited to the ones I have previously mentioned, is permitted. This is not a bill allowing religious indoctrination, but instead looking at the objective societal impact that Christianity has had on history.

As an active college student at The Ohio State University, I have taken multiple history courses despite not pursuing a degree in history. From my experience, I can confidently say that omitting the influence of Christianity, particularly in discussions of Early American and Colonial history, greatly limits one's ability to fully understand these

periods. Thank you to members of the Committee for your time and attention to this important issue.