

## **Written Testimony on HB 486 from Andrew Vitaliti**

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. My name is Andrew Vitaliti, and I'm a resident of Avon in Lorain County. I strongly urge passage of the HB 486, the Charlie Kirk American Heritage Act.

The positive influence of Christianity, the Bible and the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of humanity has had on our American civilization is indisputable and undeniable. In fact, without Jesus Christ and Christianity, our American civilization would have never come into existence nor would it have been as successful at establishing life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. There are numerous examples of this throughout our history, but I will reference three. First, in the Declaration of Independence, "Nature's God" and "Creator" are referenced as the source of rights for individuals and for nations.<sup>1</sup> Second, John Adams, as did many of the American Founders, also understood the importance of Christianity on the nation. On March 23<sup>rd</sup> in 1798, President Adams gave a Proclamation of Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer. In this proclamation, Adams dedicated Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, as a day of prayer and called on the nation to repent of its sins and call on the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy in the face of danger and tribulation.<sup>2</sup> Third, the Abolitionist movements in both Great Britain and the United States that ultimately led to the end of the slavery and slave trade were motivated primarily by Christian faith/values and Christian activism.

These examples show how Jesus Christ and Christianity have positively impacted our American culture and civilization. It is therefore imperative that educators understand the freedom that they have to teach about Christianity and its influence throughout our nation's history.

Opponents of this legislation, such as the ACLU, have previously used legal ambiguity as a way to threaten and intimidate institutions from teaching about Christianity. Passage of this bill removes that ambiguity and will disempower the ACLU from intimidating and strong-arming institutions to abide by its tyrannical standards, allowing these institutions to then use the freedom and liberty protected by law to teach about Christianity's influence on our American civilization.

For all the reasons above, I strongly urge passage of the HB 486.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew Vitaliti

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<sup>1</sup> "Declaration of Independence." <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>

<sup>2</sup> Adams, John. "March 23, 1798. Proclamation of Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer." <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/march-23-1798-proclamation-day-fasting-humiliation-and-prayer>