

Testimony in Support of SB 68

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks, and other distinguished members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of Senate Bill 68.

Hi, my name is Giana Rudolph, and I thank you for this opportunity to speak before you. I live in Lima, and I am a tenth grader at the Lima Christian Academy, a nonchartered school in Lima. While I don't understand a lot of things regarding the state chartering of schools, I do appreciate my school and appreciate what they and my family have taught me that "all men [and women, boys and girls] are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"—and it makes me happy to attend the Lima Christian Academy!

I am here testifying today regarding SB 68. SB 68 would take great financial pressure off my parents who are giving themselves to plant a church in Lima to reach people not currently being reached. My church-planting pastor-dad had to take a second job this past year to pay bills and this cleaning job has taken a great amount of time and energy away from his primary calling of reaching the neediest in Lima. (My mom also has had to take a job for the same reason.) My parents believe that the nonchartered LCA is the best place in Lima for their two daughters to receive their education, so I am asking you to support SB 68, to create Nonchartered Education Savings Accounts.

You may be asking, "Why don't you just go chartered?" Well, at my school we believe in the true separation of church and state and that true education has to do with the fear of the Lord. In school we have studied John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, and he spent twelve years in jail for refusing to take a license to preach. We would see education as dealing with truth, knowledge, values, what is real, where did everything come from, and so on—very much religious in nature, and that in principle it is not right for parents or church-schools to receive a charter (which is a license, a permission) to teach. Right now my parents' money is being directed to public schools, so children can go there for free. This should be the same for Christian Schools who are made up of people who believe there is a principle of true separation of church and state involved in education. People want their children to have good education and at our school you can have a great education; but sometimes this option is not affordable because of the tuition the parents have to pay and it is not always the easiest choice or most affordable choice. We are here today because we want Senate Bill 68 to be passed, because my parents want me to be able to keep going to our nonchartered Christian school. Please support SB 68!

Thank you,
Giana Rudolph
February 25, 2025