



Faith, Life, Marriage, Family and Religious Freedom

President April 25, 2019
John Stover

Vice-President Chair Blessing, Vice Chair Jones, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,
Jim Kerg

Treasurer
Diane Stover Thank you for the privilege of participating in the democratic process and presenting my support for House Bill 164. My name is Daniel Wolvin and I am the Senior Pastor of North Columbus Baptist Church, the State Director of Awake America Ohio and also serve as a Board Member of Ohio Value Voters.

Secretary
Theresa Stover

Board Member Forty years ago, as a college student training for ministry, I began working in a ministry initiating voluntary Bible studies in public schools. Over the decades I have continued to be involved in various aspects with high school students from over twenty-five school districts in the Greater Cleveland and Columbus areas; encouraging pupils to follow their conscience, live out their faith and stand for what they believe. Teaching and exhorting teens and young adults to embody their Biblical beliefs and speak out for the Lord Jesus Christ has been one of the more encouraging aspects of my ministry work; which includes preparing those students for negative remarks, insults and even mockery from fellow students. This is understandable and expected reaction; the Lord warned His disciples in John's Gospel, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."

Board Member
Daniel L. Wolvin

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It is more difficult to prepare students for a negative reaction from a faculty member or member of the administration when one undermines, places an undue burden or applies school policy in an inequitable fashion upon a student who is attempting to embody their sincerely-held religious beliefs.

While the majority of teachers and administrators are fair and just and do their best to be equitable and charitable to all of the diverse groups in their institutions, I have personal knowledge of incidents where Christian students faced unfair treatment from those in authority over them. Some of these are small injustices such as making a student remove their personal Bible from their classroom, forcing a student to rewrite their homework because they disagreed with the content, delivering a failing grade on a book report merely because the teacher disagreed with the theological content, verbally belittling a pupil because they stated that they believed God created the earth. Resolving those smaller conflicts usually involves the student, their parents and the teacher or administrator in a face to face meeting.

Unfortunately, there are also more serious injustices which Christian pupils have faced, some of these even make their way into headlines. A few examples are: declaring in a student's permanent record that they are belligerent and unreasonable because they politely refused to refrain from passing out literature to other students before or after school; recording an "incomplete" on a heavily-weighted assignment or project which adversely affects the GPA because it included something religious in nature; refusing to allow Christian students a room to gather for prayer while making that same allowance to pupils of other faiths; as well as many other incidents too lengthy to recite.



We Vote Values:

Faith, Life, Marriage, Family and Religious Freedom

President

John Stover

House Bill 164 would specify in Ohio law the rights granted to students under the U. S. Constitution and would ensure that those students would be free to engage in religious expression to the same extent that other students may engage in secular activities.

Vice-President

Jim Kerg

This bill would not allow Christian students to play by a different set of rules than other students, it would merely ensure that the referees apply the rules fairly for each team.

Treasurer

Diane Stover

Chairman Blessing, thank you again for granting the time to offer proponent testimony for House Bill 164. If there are any questions, I would be pleased to answer them.

Secretary

Theresa Stover

Board Member

Charles Giunta

Board Member

Daniel L. Wolvin

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