

Testimony of Jeanne Ogden

April 24, 2023

Ohio House Committee on Primary and Secondary Education

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Committee on Primary and Secondary Education. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Jeanne Ogden and I oppose Ohio HB 11 which would expand school vouchers to all students in Ohio.

My husband and I are lifelong residents of Ohio. We were educated by Catholic schools in the Cleveland and Columbus areas through high school and met at THE Ohio State University. I am an author and small press publisher and my husband has a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering and an MBA.

Together, we have raised three children.

Our parents worked hard and did without to send us to Catholic school. It was understood that state tax dollars could not be spent on our Catholic education. A "reading and speech bus" was parked on the opposite side of the parking lot, off school property, that helped kids with learning disabilities which was paid for by state tax dollars. I went there to correct a small lisp. In second grade I knew about the separation of church and state and why it was important, patriotic in fact.

My children attended Catholic school for their younger grades with similar limitations.

After school, my childhood and children's Catholic schools were packed with public school kids receiving their Catholic education. They understood that education couldn't take place in a public school.

Separation of church and state.

If universal vouchers become a reality in Ohio, there will be no separation of church and state in our education system, because in 2022, the US Supreme Court ruled in *Carson v Makin* that states who grant vouchers to all students are legally bound to allow their use in *all* schools, regardless of their religious or ideological affiliation.

This means that the state will be legally obligated to grant vouchers (and state tax dollars) to devout religious schools, Nazi schools, and any other school that can be dreamed up here in Ohio.

As a parent, one that sent my kids to Catholic school for years, I would never dream of opening that Pandora's box.

State dollars belong in public schools.

Vote no on HB 11.