

**HB 339 Proponent Testimony**

**Peter Gardner**

**2/13/24**

Chair Bird, Vice-Chair Fowler-Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary & Secondary Education Committee, my name is Peter Gardner. This is my third year teaching at The Lyceum, a small, classical, liberal-arts school in South Euclid. It has been both challenging and rewarding. Challenging, because the curriculum is wide-ranging and rigorous; great works from authors throughout history are read: Homer, Vergil, Euclid, Dante, and others, sometimes in their original languages! Rewarding, because of the manifest enlightenment and enjoyment on the part of the students, and because of the testimony of the parents, who are satisfied with their choice of our school.

But to say that parents are happy with the education we provide is not to imply that the situation is perfect. Great sacrifices must often be made, both in finances and in time spent in commute. We are humbled by what families undergo in order to be members of our community. This bill would be a great boon both to these families and to us. It would enable us to minister more effectively to more families, less constrained by financial considerations.

Hesitation might arise because of our character as a non-chartered school, and thus one whose curriculum is not beholden to the state. I would like to suggest, though, that the standards the state itself looks to for guiding curricula are unfailingly present to us, also. We, as much as other schools, look to the real benefit of the students; we strive to develop in them a love of learning, and we are rewarded by their academic success, in standardized tests and elsewhere, and by the close-knit community of grateful alumni. Again, we seek to satisfy the needs and desires of the parents; we must do, since they are entirely free to take their children elsewhere. And, finally, we are always mindful of the great tradition of classical schools, both in this country and throughout the world, which we are striving to uphold.

This bill would, accordingly, be a great benefit both to us and to the entire community in which we live. Thank you.

Peter Gardner