

To: House Primary and Secondary Education Committee

From: Carl Lahman

Date: 5/29/2024

Subject: Testimony for HB 445

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 445. My name is Carl Lahman and I am from Perry County.

For the past school year, Grace Lutheran Church in Thornville hosts the students from Thornville Elementary School across the street. Students grades 1-5 come to Grace during their lunch and recess time once a week. Grace also provides "security" volunteers that make sure the students get across the street safely.

As Council President of Grace Lutheran Church, I have had the privilege of volunteering my time to help with this program on a weekly basis. I have seen, first hand, how much the students enjoy their time learning about the Bible and positive character traits. The curriculum and activities provided are excellent.

With so many athletic and family commitments these days, especially on the weekend, it makes it harder for children to grow up having any kind of religious education. This is where the LifeWise Program is so important. By passing HB445 amendment, it will give ALL parents the ultimate choice of whether to provide religious instruction for their children.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to advocate for House Bill 445.

Sincerely,

Carl Lahman