

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 Kristen Oakley and I am from Greene County. I am absolutely in favor of mandating the opportunity for students (and their parents) to take advantage of a released time policy. Our country was built on the idea of freedom of religion, and all religions can take advantage of this kind of policy. I have been amazed at how quickly the word has spread about this opportunity just in the communities surrounding me, alone! It is obviously very popular with the citizens.

Currently, with most parents working and crowded afterschool schedules, parents can not provide the kind of religious instruction opportunities that used to be available. The track record of at least one of these programs , Lifewise Academy, indicates success in teaching some values and promoting good behavior in the schools (a badly needed side effect these days!). I have always been proud to be an Ohio resident... a state that values freedom and looks at all sides of an issue. Please listen to your residents and vote for this bill.

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

Sincerely,

Kristen Oakley