

HB 445 Proponent Testimony
Lora Lyons

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 Lora Lyons and I am from Paulding County. I am the residing Mayor of our Village of Payne.

My children have attended LifeWise Academy and my husband is the **School Resource Officer** for the Wayne Trace School District and have seen a remarkable improvement in attitude in the students that participate in LifeWise Academy. This program focuses on character building. In every great story told in history, in the legends of our past, we always touched on the character of that individual that seemed to rise above oppression, rise about adversity, rise above unworldly obstacles and still managed to make a mark and help shape our future. These men and women that grace our history books are always told to have remarkable character. Character can be taught. By working on honesty, on being humble, of dignity and respect, we can instill the necessary skills to build character. What good is a nation that can recite historical facts but cannot attest to why these names and dates are significant. Are we not demanded to learn from history and grow from it? What better way to do that than to learn of important historical figures and why their character matters.

While many may argue the validity of the Bible, no one argues that it's not one of the more historical books in the world. Many religions date back to the time of Jesus and speak His name. While some may not believe in His exact title, He did exist and He did sacrifice. Now if most religions, meaning most people in the world, as this this **2012 Pew study found that 8 of 10 people are religious in some form**, can follow the same timeline dating back to the same time line, then its valid to say He did exist and that His story is significant, which means His character and His will to help others is significant and able to be learned from. We are not asking for everyone to believe in Christianity. We are simply asking for the **opportunity** for students to learn from these important people and their stories and why their character mattered.

Allowing our students to grow and build character, skills like bravery, honesty, integrity, and selflessness, can only stand to help our nation. Let us grow our children in strength and compassion and dignity. Allow us the choice in shaping our children into a nation that rises to challenges and faces adversity head on, but

with love and kindness and an inner strength that if formed only when we form character.

Thank you sincerely for your time. Know we are *grateful for all the time and energy you have spent in helping push our state and nation forward.* We know that the majority of your efforts are often looked over, but we pray for your character and strength and **appreciate you more than you know.**

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lora Lyons". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "L" and "Y".

Lora Lyons