

May 29, 2024

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 Noreen Fauss and I am from Medina County.

I have had the privilege of being a part of a release time religious instruction program in my local school district. I have seen first hand the positive impact it has had on the students, families, school environment, and community. Our enrollment more than tripled over the course of the school year. In the last several years, there have been movements led by parents in hundreds of school districts to establish released time programs. School districts have been denying parents access to released time programs. Released time religious courses have a measurable positive impact on students and schools. Decades of research have shown the positive impact of religious instruction on student behavior, academics and mental health.

Giving parents the ultimate choice is the right thing to do. Parents know what is best for their children. They should get to decide whether to include religious education in their student's schedule. Many parents are not in a position to utilize religious private school or homeschool options. Released time makes religious education available to those who don't have access.

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

Sincerely,  
Noreen Fauss