

## **Proponent Testimony HB 61 Submitted by Todd Arrington, Ph.D., Site Manager of the James A. Garfield NHS**

We feel November 19 should be James A. Garfield Day in Ohio as a fitting commemoration of one of Ohio's native sons who rose from birth in a rustic log cabin to the presidency of the United States. Garfield took northeast Ohio values with him wherever he went, including hard work, dedication to duty, and love of both his home state and his country. He fought for the United States during the Civil War and acknowledged both the sanctity of the Union and the need to rid the nation of the horrors and injustice of slavery. Later, as a member of Congress, he supported civil rights legislation and the so-called "Reconstruction Amendments" to the Constitution. A compromise Republican presidential candidate in 1880, he won the presidency by a razor-thin popular vote margin but had the potential to be a strong and effective chief executive. Sadly, an assassin shot him on July 2, 1881, just four months into his presidential term. Garfield lingered until dying at just 49 years old on September 19, 1881. Reform of the nation's federal civil service was a major legacy of his murder.