

## **Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources**

**December 3, 2024**

### **Written Proponent Testimony: House Bill 162 Make Specified Day and Week Designations Relating to Agriculture**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony as a proponent of HB 162, which will designate several days and weeks as celebrations relating to agriculture.

The Nature Conservancy is a global organization with chapters in all 50 states and projects in over 70 countries. We are a non-partisan, science-based organization that seeks to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. We work collaboratively with businesses, farmers, sportsmen groups, governments, and local communities to develop pragmatic solutions to conservation challenges, including land conservation, water quality, and climate change. More than 65,000 Ohioans are Nature Conservancy supporters, and we own and manage over 20,000 acres of nature preserves throughout the state.

The Nature Conservancy supports the passage of HB 162, especially the establishment of Ohio Soil Health Week. Soil Health Week would celebrate the hard and diligent work of Ohio's farmers, the importance of agriculture and the role that healthy soil plays in sustaining our way of life. It also highlights the necessity of developing our state's youth into leaders and responsible stewards of the land. As a conservation organization, The Nature Conservancy's core mission is to protect the lands and waters on which all life depends. We collaborate with Ohio's farming community to produce the healthiest and most fertile farmland and to improve water quality. The agricultural designations in HB 162 play an important role in recognizing the importance of the lands and natural resources that are so crucial to the health of our citizens and environment.

The Nature Conservancy urges you to pass HB 162 to express our state's continued support and celebration of farmers and future generations of rich agriculture and healthy soil. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation. Please reach out if you have any questions.

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The Nature Conservancy