

Testimony for HB262 – Natural Family Month by Rev. Eric S. Tober, D.Min.

First, I want to thank the Chair, Rep. Gary Click, Vice Chair, Diane Mullins, and ranking member Darnell T. Brewer for allowing me the time to testify to this bill.

I was born on the south side of Chicago in 1962. I was not a planned birth, but my mother and father got married and sought to make life for us. When I was five years old my father stole money in a real estate deal, and we fly to Florida and then the Bahamas where he had a heart attack. He recovered but then left us. Yet, a local Baptist church took care of us. My mom worked as a nurse for a year and then we returned to the Chicago area to live with my grandparents. I know full well the great need for the traditional Mother and Father.

Interestingly, I did not feel the pain of the absence of a father until I got into my adult years and was looking for guidance, unconditional love, and wisdom for the challenges of work, being a husband, and a father to my own children.

*I have served churches for 38 years and half of my pastoral counseling could have been avoided if the person I was counseling had experienced a loving mother and father while growing up.* My wife and I have been married now for 41 years, and we have been doing marriage seminars for 25 years. We have witnessed a shift in the last 25 years where the culture makes fun of the natural family and alternative worldviews have broken up marriages and families. At the heart of this is separating ourselves from the natural family under the misguided thinking of finding our “authentic self”.

I serve part-time as a Chaplain with Ohio Health. I minister to people facing sickness, pain, and often impending death. It is obvious the difference in the healthcare of a patient if they have a supportive family and more so when a young person is in the hospital and there is a supportive mom and Dad. Unfortunately, I have also witnessed the pain that can occur for a patient when they do not have the loving support of a mother or father.

I serve as a volunteer Chaplain with the Dublin Police Department, and I served for a time on the DEI committee of Dublin Public Schools. While education and protective resources are necessary for our communities. The issues that arise that require police or committees could often have been cared for more effectively by a loving mother and father in the home. We know half of the families of Ohio are single parent families and all those children need our loving support. We started a childcare to help but the real need is the natural family.

I want to offer my strong support for a “Natural Family month” celebration. While there are many monthly celebrations for our calendars the “natural family” emphasis is critical for our times. It will encourage the younger generation that we do value the family when other voices in our culture have been sending subtle and direct attacks on the natural family.

