

136th General Assembly
Regular Session
2025-2026
H.B. 262

Chair Click, Vice Chair Mullins, Ranking Member Brewer, and Members of the House
Community Revitalization Committee:

The sponsors of Ohio House Bill 262 have made a modest proposal.

The sponsors and co-sponsors have proposed that the Ohio Revised Code merely *designate* the weeks between Mother's Day and Father's Day as "Natural Family Month." That is the entire proposal.

No laws have been proposed. No taxes will be collected. There is no required participation. No fines or penalties for non-participation. And there are no orders or requirements for anything at all to happen as a result of this Bill being passed.

It is a modest proposal. What is a "Natural Family?" It is one man, one woman, married for life, raising children together. Easy to understand. Completely uncontroversial.

One hopes that various persons and groups will take notice of this designation, and be inspired to do something good in response!

Perhaps some people and groups will help unmarried men and women find suitable marriage partners who share the same desires and goals as they do, so they may marry.

Perhaps they will help these couples learn how to begin a stable, loving, mutually beneficial marriage.

Perhaps they will help them, once married, carry out the wonderful, meaningful, arduous task of raising children from little girls and boys to loving, productive lives as women and men.

Perhaps they will teach and train men and women who have been married for any number of years, enabling them to have satisfying marriages and successfully raise children.

And perhaps they will support these marriages through the most difficult experiences and challenges of marriage: the differences, the conflicts, the intense emotions, the crushing disappointments, and the unexpected tragedies of life. Hopefully, they help them stay married through it all, convinced that intact marriages and families are usually worth it, and always worth the effort.

Perhaps they will convince people to wait for marriage to have children, reducing the illegitimacy rate and the number of fatherless families, and thereby reducing poverty, crime, drug usage, and mental illness. That would be good.

Certainly pro-family individuals and groups will cheer this effort. Who will oppose it? Is anyone really "anti-family?" Will anyone oppose this loving response to this modest proposal?

Some will be startled to read some of the opposition testimony. Just glancing at a few of those submitted, I see comments describing this modest proposal as "cruel," "unnecessary," "a spit

in the face," "blatant insult," "exclusionary," "anti-LGBTQ+," "strategic erasure," "deeply offensive," and "alarming."

Obviously, these opponents of HB 262 are not arguing against helping the hundred of thousands of people who are beneficiaries of the modest proposal. Are they? Many of them are devoting their lives to helping people! We **must** be able to agree that caring for people and helping people live better lives is a noble, worth effort.

Perhaps, perhaps, that as a result of this modest proposal, and the response to it, hundreds of thousands of Ohioans will notice, will remember, will connect, will commit themselves to their marriages and their families, and to helping their neighbors live fuller, more meaningful, more joyful lives. Perhaps we will join them.

It is a modest proposal. But it may bring a tremendous benefit to all Ohioans. Let us work and pray together toward that end.

As an aside, I have dedicated my adult life to helping children, students, singles, marrieds, and families.

I am available for questions.

Sincerely,

Gary Lankford