

44th House District

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State Representative Joshua E. Williams
Ohio House of Representatives

Chairman Roemer, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and fellow members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on HB 340 today.

Population decline is one of the greatest issues facing Ohio that is difficult to see with your own two eyes: you can see people struggling with drug addiction, you can see money leaving your bank account when you pay tax, but you cannot see a shrinking tax base or every car that moves from Ohio to the coasts. In fact, experts predict Ohio's population will shrink by over half a million in the next 25 years: that is half a million less innovators, workers, and people helping fund the upkeep of our great state.¹ There are many different elected officials who have suggested many different ways to tackle this issue, and I stand here today to be one of them.

This bill allows employers to award employees a tax-deductible "childbirth bonus" in the calendar year that the employee or the employee's spouse gives birth to or adopts a child so long as proper documentation is submitted to the employer. This bonus is tax-deductible up to \$1,000 per parent and/or couple, with a \$50,000 maximum credit per employer per year. Encouraging these sorts of incentives for childbirth both decreases the cost burden Ohio families must face when planning their families and encourages Ohio's

¹ <https://www.nbc4i.com/news/local-news/central-ohio-news/ohio-projected-to-experience-long-term-population-decline-report-reveals/>

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goal of being a family-friendly state, as these bonuses will demonstrate that Ohio companies are friendly to families and want to cooperate with families as opposed to forcing them into tough spots.

If Ohio truly seeks to discourage emigration and encourage families to both move and begin their new lives here, we must be willing to take bold steps to loosen the burdens and struggles modern life places on families. This bill, along with House Bills 231, 262, 341, and 342 comprise my Family First Agenda; by making it easier and more cost-effective for families to settle in our state, we can make Ohio a bustling destination for stable, thriving families. Chairman Roemer, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and fellow members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 340. I welcome any questions you may have.