

**44<sup>th</sup> House District**

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**State Representative Joshua E. Williams**  
**Ohio House of Representatives**

Chairman Roemer, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 342 today.

Plain and simple, family is good for Ohio. However a family is comprised, the family is a structure which supports our state's elderly and raises our state's children: without it, we would have nothing. Supporting and encouraging families in Ohio and Ohio's reputation as a pro-family state then addresses both the moral and practical responsibilities of government. Practically, families both stave off the threats which Ohio's looming depopulation, causing us to lose hundreds of thousands of workers and innovators, pose and help reduce the state's burden in taking care of our elderly. Morally, what good is a government that cannot put in some effort to support one of our most fundamental social structures? Once again, I stand before you offering part of a common-sense solution to these existential threats which face our great state.

This bill allows employers to award employees a tax-deductible "marriage bonus" in the calendar year that their employee gets married so long as proper documentation is submitted to the employer. This bonus is tax-deductible up to \$1,000 per couple, with a \$50,000 maximum credit per employer per year. Encouraging these sorts of incentives lowers the upfront costs of starting a family with essentially no harm done to the state,

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further branding and making Ohio an ideal state to start a family. Further, these bonuses demonstrate that Ohio companies are friendly to families and want to cooperate with families as opposed to forcing them into tough spots, making Ohio a more attractive place to work.

Bills like this fulfill our government's moral responsibility to families while tackling practical issues Ohio faces, all the while not forcing our companies or workers to do anything. This bill, along with House Bills 231, 262, 340, and 341 comprise my Family First Agenda; these bills all seek to provide simple yet effective solutions to the fact that people are not starting, raising, and growing families in Ohio at the same rate they did fifty years ago. If Ohio truly wants to be a place where families know they can build their future without dreading over the upfront, then we must boldly approach policy which puts families first. Chairman Roemer, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 342. I welcome any questions you may have.