

As Introduced

136th General Assembly

Regular Session

2025-2026

H. B. No. 53

Representatives Fischer, Pizzulli

**Cosponsors: Representatives Bird, Brennan, Jarrells, Williams, Brewer, Sigrist,
Deeter, Ritter, Dovilla, Odioso, Schmidt**

A BILL

To enact section 5.295 of the Revised Code to 1
designate February 4th as John Rankin Day, and 2
to require a statue of John Rankin to be erected 3
on the statehouse grounds. 4

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 5.295 of the Revised Code be 5
enacted to read as follows: 6

Sec. 5.295. The fourth day of February is designated as 7
"John Rankin Day," in honor of the American abolitionist, 8
minister, and educator who was born that day in 1793. Settling 9
in Ripley, Ohio, in 1822, he was an early anti-slavery writer, a 10
conductor on the underground railroad, and a major contributor 11
to Ohio's legacy of freedom. 12

Section 2. Notwithstanding any contrary provision in 13
section 105.41 of the Revised Code or in any rule or procedure 14
adopted by the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board, the 15
Board shall designate, not later than October 1, 2025, a 16
prominent place on the lawn or other outside grounds of Capitol 17

Square for the erection of a permanent memorial to John Rankin, 18
(1793-1886), the abolitionist, minister, and educator who was a 19
conductor of the underground railroad in Ohio. The Ohio History 20
Connection and the Board shall work together to invite, accept, 21
and evaluate proposals for the concept, design, and erection of 22
such a memorial, and shall jointly select from among the 23
proposals the memorial to be designed and erected at the place 24
designated by the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board for 25
that purpose. Site preparation, utility placement, and other 26
preliminary construction activities shall be paid for with 27
public funds. Planning for and designing and erecting the 28
memorial shall be paid for with only private contributions. The 29
Capitol Square Foundation shall accept private contributions for 30
those purposes, and shall deposit the contributions into the 31
John Rankin Memorial Fund. 32