



Ohio Citizen Action

The premier grassroots mobilization team in Ohio and the Midwest

Before the Ohio House of Representatives
Public Utilities Committee
Representative Mike Dovilla, Chair
Wednesday, November 16, 2016

Hearing on H.B. 554

Testimony of
Melissa English, Development Director
Ohio Citizen Action

Make Ohio a clean energy leader again

Chairman Dovilla, Vice Chair Roegner, Ranking Member Ashford and members
of the committee,

I write today on behalf of more than 20,000 Ohioans who have recently spoken out in favor of reinstating Ohio's mandatory renewable energy and energy efficiency portfolio standards. I can't be with you in committee today, because I'm outside on the North Plaza with a group of colleagues, allies and supporters protesting plans to extend what we call "the freeze".

As part of our action today, we will deliver to Governor Kasich a petition to end the freeze, signed by more than 20,000 Ohioans in the last year. We began collecting these, long before HR 554 was introduced, because we recognized that certain members of both chambers would not be content to allow the freeze to expire at the end of this year, as Governor Kasich had arranged.

In our conversations on front porches with these 20,000 people, we learned first-hand what surveys have been telling us for years – that a majority of Ohioans favor replacing coal with renewable sources like solar and wind energy. Their motivations vary.

(more)

www.ohiocitizen.org

614 West Superior Avenue, Suite 1200, Cleveland, OH 44113 216-861-5200
2330 Victory Parkway, Suite 401, Cincinnati, OH 45206 513-221-2100

Some connect their family health problems, like asthma or COPD with pollution from burning coal. And it simply can't be a coincidence that U. S. EPA ranks Ohio's air 3rd worst in the nation while the Energy Information Administration ranks Ohio's coal consumption as 3rd highest in the nation. Some people have seen solar and wind projects or energy efficiency auditing bring jobs to their communities and recognize clean energy's impact on our economy. Even with the freeze in effect, we have over 100,000 clean energy sector jobs in the state. Some have seen their electric bills go down, after energy assessments, discounts or rebates. When the mandatory renewable energy and energy efficiency portfolio standards were in effect, Ohioans saw \$1.03 billion in savings on their bills.

Most of these people were unaware their lawmakers froze our progress toward greater energy efficiency and renewable energy use until we told them. They were not happy. We are outside today giving voice to their displeasure and in addition to our visit to the governor's office, we carry their message to you: Make Ohio a clean energy leader again. Let HB 554 die in committee. Allow the mandatory renewable energy and energy efficiency portfolio standards to resume for now and if it's necessary to refine them, do so next year and with the will of the people in mind.