



**Representatives David Leland and Michele Lepore-Hagan
22nd and 58th Ohio House Districts**

**House Concurrent Resolution 14 – Joint Sponsor Testimony
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Tuesday, September 19, 2017**

Chairman Landis, Vice Chair Hagan, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee; thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Concurrent Resolution 14, which would affirm the commitment by the great State of Ohio to reduce greenhouse emissions in the United States by supporting the Paris agreement. As we all watched the devastation created by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma--their intensity fueled by waters overheated by greenhouse gases--it is clear- now more than ever--that we need to re-affirm the Paris agreement.

The Paris Agreement came into force on November 4, 2016, and committed 197 nations to a goal of holding global temperature rise to “well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels” and cutting net greenhouse gas emissions to zero in the second half of this century.

The U.S. negotiated hard in Paris, winning strong transparency and accountability measures to ensure that China and India do their fair share. It included the ability for every country—including the U.S.—to set its own non-binding emissions reduction targets, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). The U.S. target is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 26–28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025. These reductions will give Americans cleaner air, a livable planet for our children, and, in many cases, cheaper electricity. Moreover, it is a clarion call for all to embrace the biggest job creating opportunity of this Century.

We should heed and embrace that call in the same spirit of inventiveness and imagination that inspired the Wright Brothers to take flight, Harvey Firestone, B.F. Goodrich and Frank Seiberling to put millions of Americans on the road, and Neil Armstrong to take a giant leap for all mankind.

[Joining](#) the 13 states, hundreds of elected officials and university presidents, and more than one thousand five hundred companies, including many of America's largest and most innovative, in supporting the Paris accords will truly be a giant leap forward for Ohio businesses and workers.

As a lifelong resident of Youngstown, I experienced first-hand the devastation that took place on September 19, 1977 when the steel industry began to implode. Now known as Black Monday, it marked a wave of economic destruction that reverberates to this day in the Mahoning Valley,



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Lorain, Cleveland, and other cities that were centers of heavy industry. While many factors contributed to the collapse of steel production in my hometown, experts agree that the failure of companies to invest in new plants and equipment was the primary reason why tens of thousands of people lost their jobs within months.

That experience informs my support for the Paris Accords. The workers across America who responded enthusiastically to President Trump when he said he would make America great again by restoring good-paying manufacturing jobs are now at risk of losing the opportunity to participate in one of the industries that will drive the economy in the 21st Century. I find it ironic that the people who cheered then-candidate Trump in cities across Ohio, including Youngstown, may now be left on the sidelines as corporations and workers in Shanghai, Beijing, Viet Nam, Europe, and the rest of the world outside the United States lead, profit, and prosper from the clean energy revolution.

And there is profit—huge profit—to be made from taking the steps necessary to reduce global warming and protect our planet for our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. You do not have to take my word for it, the CEO's of America's largest companies, including Amazon, which is preparing to make substantial investments in our state, believe that the development of clean, alternative energy sources is critical to their future. The Business Environmental Leadership Council of the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions comprised of GE, Dominion, BP, GM, Alcoa, PG&E, Lockheed Martin, and other large employers recognize both the risks and opportunities associate with climate change.

That is why they have all committed to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and supporting policies, including the Paris Accords, which will slow global warming. Among the policies, they favor investing in products, practices, and technologies that will drive energy innovation. Registering our state's support for the Paris accords will send a loud and clear message to these companies that Ohio is eager to be the home of clean energy technology and the good-paying jobs it will create.

Chairman Landis, Vice Chair Hagan, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee; thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this important issue and affirming the State's commitment to reaching the goals of Paris Climate Accord. We are able to answer any questions you may have at this time.