



HOUSE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE
Opponent Testimony on HB 178
Tuesday May 16, 2017

Chairman Seitz, Vice Chair Carfagna, Ranking Member Ashford, and members of the House Public Utilities Committee thank you for the opportunity to join you today presenting opposition testimony on House Bill 178.

I represent tens of thousands of Americans for Prosperity activists in Ohio who believe in the benefits of a free society and work for free market policy at the local, state and federal levels. We are in opposition to House Bill 178 which subsidizes Ohio's nuclear industry and passes the costs on to Ohio residents through their electricity bills.

HB 178 creates the Zero-Emissions Nuclear Resource Program that would require electric distribution utilities in Ohio to purchase nuclear energy credits. The credits are used to subsidize the operation of two nuclear power plants in Ohio. The bill allows the costs of the credits to be directly passed onto consumers through a non-by-passable rider placed on customers' electricity bill. The starting price of these credits would be \$17 dollars and would likely rise over time. The program would last for up to 16 years meaning consumers would be forced to subsidize the nuclear industry and face higher electric bills for the next decade and a half.

According to early calculations from the Ohio Consumers' Council and [reported](#) by the AARP, the bill could mean Ohio consumers pay, on average, up to \$57 more each year for electricity. Over the 16-year period of the program, it could cost an Ohio electricity customer up to \$912. It is unacceptable to force Ohioans to pay close to \$1,000 over the next 16 years to bailout the state's nuclear industry.

Ohio's energy policy should focus on providing affordable and reliable electricity regardless of the source. The state should not be in the business of picking winners and losers through mandates, subsidies, and other types of preferential policies. Instead, the government should focus on providing a level playing field that is neutral to the source of electricity.

Beyond creating subsidies, HB 178 decreases transparency by removing financial data from the public record. The bill explicitly removes from the public record all financial statements and data submitted to the public utilities commission for purposes of satisfying the criteria as a

zero-emissions nuclear resource. Companies that receive taxpayer money should be subject to more financial disclosure and transparency, not less.

Ohio should not pursue an energy policy that picks winners through a subsidy program while passing on the costs to utility consumers. Americans for Prosperity – OH strongly opposes HB 178 and has marked it as a key vote on our legislative scorecard. We thank you for your work on this important issue and look forward to continuing efforts to improve our state energy policies.

Thank you again Mr. Chairman for the time in committee today and I welcome any questions from the committee.