

Good afternoon, Chairman Seitz and members of the Committee. I'm Arno Hill, Mayor of the Village of Lordstown in Trumbull County.

Until recently, Lordstown was best known for the Lordstown Assembly, a General Motors plant where we proudly manufacture the Chevrolet Cruze. Today, we are proud to be known for another major job-creator and industry emerging in Ohio and that is natural gas-fueled electricity, thanks to the existing deregulated market Ohio has enjoyed since 1999.

That said, our region has certainly had its share of ups and downs. In fact recently, we have had several significant lay-offs at the Lordstown plant, which might lead one to believe that our future may not look bright. However, that future is bright because soon Lordstown will have two state of the art natural-gas fired power plants. Lordstown Energy Center will produce 800MW of energy and represents an investment in our community of \$890 million. The plant is expected to come online in early 2018.

The Clean Energy Future-Trumbull project will generate another 940MW and is another \$865 million invested directly in our community.

Together these plants represent thousands of construction jobs with millions of man-hours. For just one plant the construction and ancillary economic activity associated with the plant would produce an additional \$14.5 million in state and local tax revenues.

This doesn't even account for the millions in property tax payments which will deliver timely and needed funds to our local schools.

In fact just yesterday I was attending a groundbreaking for our soccer fields, which are direct result of funding generated from these projects. In addition, we've welcomed strong philanthropic support and real investment into our community by these companies as well, whether it be through funding local uniforms at our schools, helping the United Way, and even partnerships with Youngstown State University so our kids can have hands-on experience—the investment made is real, its heartfelt, and most importantly has not come with strings attached.

The investment into our community has been holistic and has spurred a newfound interest in Lordstown for other economic activity as well. As the economic impact study correctly predicted, these plants absolutely have a ripple impact on the community in a very positive way.

Passing HB 178 puts all of that investment in jeopardy.

The projects being built in Lordstown and elsewhere across the state are driven by private investment – not ratepayer money. If HB 178 is passed, those same investors will be sent a message that Ohio is not open for competitive business.

What's more is that the risk is born by the investor – not the ratepayer. There are no special fees or bailouts for those power plants.

Why should we be forced to pay a minimum of 5% a year in special fees to FirstEnergy – especially when those fees will be used to put the two plants in Lordstown at a competitive disadvantage?

Keep the playing field level and vote no on HB 178.