

To co-chairs Stein and O'Brien, and the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation, I urge you to oppose substitute HB 6.

What is a top priority of governing? One top priority should be public safety, and protecting our environment for the health of ourselves and future generations. By that criterion, the two remaining nuclear power plants in Ohio, should be closed and decommissioned, especially Davis-Besse, which has had multiple close calls. Nuclear disasters have the potential to make an area uninhabitable for generations: think Chernobyl; think Fukushima. Here again, HB 6 is designed to subsidize these two old, uneconomical nuclear power plants and keep them operating.

Another top priority of governing should be to encourage good behavior, and try to avoid creating incentives for undesirable behavior. Here again, HB 6 is creating a moral hazard by bailing out the bad decisions of First Energy Solutions, which is currently in bankruptcy. It is crony capitalism. Also, it is totally removing requirements that electric utilities keep increasing their efficiency. These requirements from the Renewable Portfolio Standards, passed almost unanimously in 2008, have been an extremely good investment, paying for themselves manyfold.

This bill's goal is to protect our air, but it is protecting old, dangerous power plants, while not facilitating the growth of efficiency and renewable energy, which we need to be moving to as fast as possible. Furthermore, another stated goal of the bill is "[t]o create or preserve jobs and employment opportunities or improve the economic welfare of the people" (Section 3706.03 (A)( 5)). The nuclear power plants need to be decommissioned, and the current workers are the logical, most knowledgeable ones to do that. It is work that will take years, and give time for workers and the area to transition. Furthermore, solar, wind and efficiency already have many more workers than coal, for instance, and have opportunities for many more workers. These energy efforts are the future, not nuclear.

I urge you to oppose this substitute HB6.