

PROPONENT TESTIMONY OF
PERRY JOINT FIRE DISTRICT, CHIEF JAMES MCDONALD
BEFORE THE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
OF THE OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 15, 2019

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to speak to you today to voice my whole-hearted support for an important piece of legislation, HB6, which would create the Ohio Clean Air Program. My name is James McDonald and I'm the Fire Chief for the Perry Joint Fire District. Not only would HB 6 go a long way in controlling emissions and keeping Ohio's air cleaner, but it would help protect much-needed tax revenue that supports emergency services like the ones provided by firefighters and other first responders. That is why I am asking for your support today.

As you have no doubt heard, the nuclear power created by these two plants represents the vast majority of emissions-free electricity produced in Ohio. But more than just simply ensuring our air stays as clean as possible - which is in and of itself an important enough goal - the Perry nuclear power plant as well as Ohio's other nuclear facility outside of Toledo, together provide \$30 million in local and state tax revenue. These funds go directly to such critical services as education and the emergency responders, including the Perry Joint Fire District.

If HB 6 fails to pass and these two nuclear plants are forced to shut their doors before their time, then that is tens of millions of dollars in funding that will just vanish in the blink of an eye.

That would have an enormous impact on our ability to serve our community and protect local homes and businesses during an emergency situation. To be perfectly clear, without the tax contributions made by our State's nuclear fleet, funding for emergency services statewide would be negatively impacted, undermining emergency responders' mission and posing a direct threat to public safety.

Furthermore, the Perry plant along with the Davis-Besse facility outside of Toledo are among the safest, most reliable, and highest performing nuclear plants in the country. In fact, between these two plants, First Energy has improved its industry standard Nuclear Power plant performance index by 18 percent to what is now the combined second highest in the country. Over \$3 billion in capital investment has been spent to modernize the plants and improve reliability over the last decade. Like other nuclear facilities nationwide, these plants include comprehensive safety systems to ensure public safety and protect plant workers, including up-to-date emergency plans that are exercised regularly. In 2013, a total of 560 acres on Lane Rd. Extension was purchased by two private individuals. Perry Township had applied for Federal and State funding to put an industrial road way in with water and sewer. The 560 acres was placed in to the JEDD (joint economic development), which would have gained us income tax from the employees, net profit tax from businesses and higher property tax evaluation. The Lake Metro Parks applied for Federal and State funding and purchased 460 acres of the property from the two private individuals, which we now do not receive any revenue or tax money from. This only leaves 100 acres for development. The taxes generated from the Perry Nuclear Power Plant make up 40% of the Perry Joint Fire District's budget. Over the years, we have lost money from the devaluation of the plant, the loss of TTP (tangible personal property taxes), Public Utility Tangible tax and the deregulation.

The last two years, since the Perry Nuclear Power Plant has filed bankruptcy, we have lost \$800,000.00 of our \$2.2 million budget.

The Ohio General Assembly should not jeopardize the future of the Perry Joint Fire District and firefighters, police, and other emergency first responders across the State by neglecting to pass HB6. Ohioans are counting on you to do the right thing by advancing this important legislation that would both keep our air cleaner and ensure vital funding for emergency and other community services remain protected.

Please keep these viewpoints in mind, and thank you again for your time and consideration of this very important matter.