

HB 6 Testimony: Matthew Messenger

Thank you for having me today. Mr. Chairman, committee members, my name is Matthew Messenger and I'm a project manager at the Perry Nuclear Plant. I'm here to offer this testimony in support of House Bill 6, legislation that would create the Ohio Clean Air Program and protect thousands of much-needed jobs for Ohio workers.

Each of Ohio's two nuclear power plants supports somewhere in the neighborhood of 700-800 jobs through direct employment. When you factor in the jobs that are also supported indirectly through these plants' operations, that figure increases to roughly 4,300. Unless the Ohio General Assembly passes HB 6, these jobs will be threatened, and many hardworking men and women could find themselves facing unemployment. With your support, we can protect the thousands of Ohio jobs that are associated with nuclear power development.

The thousands of Ohioans working in the nuclear power sector at these two facilities contribute to some of the safest working conditions in the state. Nuclear power plants like the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station and the Perry Nuclear Power Plant maintain the highest standards for operational, safety, and emergency preparedness. Workers at Davis-Besse, just as an example, have logged over 14 million man-hours without a single lost-time accident. That's a pretty incredible feat.

Moreover, these are well-paying, highly skilled jobs that will not be easily replaced if HB 6 does not pass and our nuclear fleet is forced to retire early. All these employees cannot simply pick up their families and move to find new jobs—it simply isn't feasible. And the most likely power source that will replace the lost capacity we'll experience—natural gas—just doesn't need as many workers. Compared to nuclear facilities, which as I mentioned support around 700-800 jobs, a natural gas plant only supports 25-50. That's a huge difference.

There's also a larger economic impact to consider. These plants spend \$45 million a year with Ohio-based vendors and suppliers, strengthening businesses in other blue-collar economic sectors, including manufacturing. All told, it's estimated that if these plants are shuttered prematurely, our state will lose out on more than half-a-billion dollars in GDP annually.

There's too much at stake here not to pass HB 6. On behalf of Ohio's dedicated nuclear power plant workers and our statewide labor force, I ask that you please support this vital legislation.