

May 22, 2019

To the Ohio House Energy & Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation

RE: Sub House Bill 6 - Opponent Testimony
Submitted via e-mail.

Chair Stein, Chair O'Brien, and Members of the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation,

Ohio should not bail out a bankrupt company. Not by increasing electric rates. Not by manipulating regulatory or regional transmission rulings. Not by calling nuclear by another name, such as zero emissions facilities.

I certainly hope elected officials in Columbus, including my own local representatives, realize most of us here in Ottawa County oppose HB6 which would bail out Davis Besse. While I certainly appreciate my local leaders' desire to preserve jobs at Davis Besse, and thereby retain payroll taxes and the other benefits of many higher-than-average pay jobs, it is not the responsibility of Ohio taxpayers to support a bankrupt company.

It is inevitable that nuclear power plants will close. Even if everything goes right, the operating lifetime of a nuclear plant is limited by the expiration date on the plant's operating license. Knowing that economic hardship in reactor towns is the inevitable fate upon reactor closures, it is critical that transition planning for closure takes place well before it happens – NOW! The key to avoiding such a crisis is – "just transitions."

Just transitions is the pre-planning for inevitable reactor closure that will both soften the economic blow from lost tax base revenues, while bringing in new business and job opportunities for the affected communities.

Nuclear utilities, being a "company town" type employer, do have at the very least a moral obligation to help the communities they impact plan for responsible closure. So that the outcome is fair to both parties, this obligation should be made a legal obligation as well, spelling out clearly what those obligations are.

No comprehensive Energy Plan would be complete without a Retain and Retrain program for shuttered coal and nuclear plants. Residents who would be affected by the closure of nuclear plants need to force state legislators to enact "just transitions" laws to plan in advance for the inevitable effects of reactor closure. After all, responsible adults plan for their retirements before they retire. So should responsible communities and nuclear utilities.

A subsidy is essentially the same as a bureaucracy. Once created, it will never be extinguished, but will be expanded to feed its own needs. "Just Transitions" programs

would eliminate the need for never-ending corporate utility “bailouts”, as utilities with out-of-date business models continue seeking wealth transfers from ratepayers to their shareholders to prop up declining and vanishing industries.

Wishing plants to stay open forever is simply foolish - they won't. Relying on an endless streak of legislative bailouts is not much of a retirement plan. If you're a responsible adult, chances are you have begun saving up for your retirement: a savings account; investments; a 401.k; even a piggy bank. But the most important thing that we all understand is, the best time to plan and save is – before you retire!

There is an alternative to the "bailout or bust option", and it's simple: we need laws that require the utilities and dependent communities to jointly establish “retirement savings plans”.

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