

Testimony on SB 33 before House Public Utilities Committee

September 25 2019

By Roxanne Groff

“Governments have an affirmative obligation to protect the rights of their citizens, according to internationally recognized human-rights Covenants and Declarations. When governments fail to adequately regulate harmful oil and gas industry practices, they fail to meet their human rights obligations. And when governments fail to take measures to prevent the advance of climate change and its impacts on the rights to life, liberty, and security and standing up, they are failing to meet their internationally recognized human-rights obligations. Widespread government failures have created a global “axis of betrayal,” according to the international court, in which governments and fossil-fuel industries collude – at great cost to people and the planet – in human-rights violations to their mutual profit.”- Thomas Kerns, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Seattle Community College, Permanent People’s Tribunal  
<https://www.tribunalonfracking.org/what-is-the-permanent-peoples-tribunal/>

## Testimony before the House Public Utilities Committee

September 25, 2019  
Senate Bill 33  
Jamie Callendar, Chair  
By Roxanne Groff

Chairman Callendar and members of the Public Utilities Committee, my name is Roxanne Groff and I live in rural Athens County and wish to present opponent testimony to **SB 33**. I am a former Athens County Commissioner and Bern Township Trustee, holding office as an elected official for 20 years.

Millions of our youth led a worldwide Climate Strike on Friday September 20 to tell their governments to take on the challenge of making the difference in the world wide climate crisis. Did any of you join them?

What do you think these young people would say if they went to school on Monday following the marches and were told, " your government just took away your right to march in the streets to protest"?

What would your children say if you went home tonight and told them you were going to vote for a law that would make them a criminal if they participated in a protest against an industry that they believe is killing our planet?

Senate Bill 33 takes away a person's right to join in a protest for the purpose of educating others in their communities of the extreme health risks and dangers caused by the oil and gas industries' freedom to assault our land air and water by fracking, injecting toxic radioactive oil and gas waste into the ground, emit uncontrolled methane and other volatile organic compounds into the air and take over land for the building of massive pipelines to move gas to ship overseas.

SOME lawmakers say, it does no such thing.

Current Ohio law covers the act of trespass on private property and penalizes a person accordingly. Senate Bill 33, as Ohio law, will increase penalties and make someone a felon for an act of trespass on so called critical infrastructure. You know how this will play out! You are purposefully imposing arbitrary and discriminatory application of the law to oil and gas infrastructure. People will believe the new law will put them in jail and fine them and any organization that

helps them organize a protest if they show up at any of the sites where oil and gas activities exist or will be built. The fine could be a sum of money that could bankrupt them. That fear will chill the efforts of any person or group using protest as a means to get attention to the Climate Crisis. Millions of people around the world are participating in the effort to bring awareness to lawmakers.... like you, to stand up for **us**, the people.

Why do you want to abrogate your responsibilities to the people by making us go to court to have the judicial system overturn laws,.... like in South Dakota where a similar bill to SB 33 was stayed by a federal judge?

What in the world is in your way that keeps you from understanding the climate crisis and the world wide effects it is having on our earth? our health? Our future?

There is an increased awareness in every community of the health risks directly related to the extraction of oil and gas and its buildouts of compressor stations, injection wells and pipelines that encourage us to ACT to educate others by means of protest:

**Scientific and Medical evidence of the risks and harms of unconventional oil and gas extraction** <https://www.psr.org/blog/2019/09/20/global-climate-strike-calls-attention-to-health-emergency/>

**Environmental Health concerns from unconventional natural gas development** <https://oxfordre.com/publichealth/publichealth/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190632366.001.0001/acrefore-9780190632366-e-44>

**The Permanent People's Tribunal on Human Rights, Fracking and Climate Change** <https://www.tribunalonfracking.org/judges-statements/>

**THE PERMANENT PEOPLES' TRIBUNAL** Streaming Globally  
on Human Rights, Fracking and Climate Change **MAY 14 - 18, 2018**

**Hydraulic Fracturing and Health** <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/fracking/index.cfm>

### **Ohio's Secret Fracking Chemicals**

Records Show Widespread Use of Secret Fracking Chemicals Poses Risks to Water Supplies, Health in the Buckeye State <http://www.pfpi.net/secret-fracking-chemicals-threaten-ohioans-health-drinking-water>

**THREE OHIO OIL & GAS EXPLOSIONS, WELL BLOWOUTS OR GAS RELEASES IN TWO WEEKS – TWO WORKERS ARE DEAD AND ANOTHER INJURED** <https://metroforensics1.blogspot.com/2014/11/three-ohio-oil-explosions-well-blowouts.html>

**WORKER KILLED AT DRILLING SITE CARROLL COUNTY** <https://www.processingmagazine.com/worker-killed-at-drilling-site-in-ohio/>

**OHIO PIPELINE EXPLOSION INJURES TWO, DAMAGES THREE HOMES, NOBLE COUNTY**

**JULIE GRANT** JANUARY 22, 2019

<https://www.alleghenyfront.org/ohio-pipeline-explosion-injures-two-damages-three-homes/>

**WELL PAD EXPLOSION IN EASTERN OHIO CAUSES EVACUATION OF RESIDENTS, BELMONT COUNTY**

**JULIE GRANT** FEBRUARY 16, 2018

<https://www.alleghenyfront.org/well-pad-explosion-in-eastern-ohio-causes-mandatory-evacuation-of-residents/>

**USEPA report reveals ODNr repeatedly AWOL from field command meetings during critical early days of massive fracking fire incident, Monroe County June 2014** <https://www.dispatch.com/article/20140629/NEWS/306299873>

Ohio Environmental Council, July 23, 2014

<https://www.tribunalonfracking.org/this-session-is-historic/>

**Poll: Conservative Ohio voters overwhelmingly support more clean energy** By **Kelsey Misbrenner** | February 15, 2019

<https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2019/02/poll-conservative-ohio-voters-overwhelmingly-support-more-clean-energy/> 

It should also be noted that conservative voters continue to view increasing the use of renewable energy sources as a job creator. And, 82% support allowing utility customers who generate their own power through solar panels to be compensated for generating more power than they can use.

**Midwest Renewables Surge Forward: But Where Is Ohio?** March 29,

2019 While a number of factors are driving renewables growth in the Midwest, policy action is one of the most critical. Unfortunately, though, Ohio is not one of those states. The state has been fallow ground for renewable energy development in the last few years, lagging behind its neighbors. In fact, Ohio appears to be earning the dubious distinction of being *dead-last* in the race to transition its power generation to cleaner sources.

<https://www.nrdc.org/experts/samantha-williams/midwest-renewables-surge-forward-where-ohio>

We have common ground. We have families, kids, grandchildren, we go to work, we go to school, we go to meetings, we go to church, we try to solve problems we commit to our communities. Then how the hell can we be so far apart on the one issue that we should all share.....saving this planet!! Stop trying to punish us for speaking out and standing up for the truth!!

You must stand with the people and vote NO on SB 33.