



House Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation  
Chair Dick Stein and Chair Michael O'Brien  
Opponent Testimony on House Bill 6  
Testimony of Becky Campbell  
Manager of Government Affairs, First Solar, Inc.

April 23, 2019

Chair Stein, Chair O'Brien, and Members of the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation, my name is Becky Campbell and I'm the Manager of Government Affairs at First Solar. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today as an opponent to Ohio House Bill 6.

First Solar is a global provider of comprehensive photovoltaic (PV) solar energy solutions, with more than 200 million solar panels deployed globally. We are the largest and one of the last remaining U.S.-based solar panel manufacturers. We broke ground on our first Perrysburg facility in 1999 and through increased automation, upgrades and expansion, First Solar's Perrysburg manufacturing operations now span more than 1,000,000 square feet, with an annual capacity of 600 MW and employs more than 1,250 associates.

First Solar appreciates Representatives Callendar's and Wilkin's stated intent to support carbon-free energy sources and provide long-term rate stability for Ohioans. However, as a representative of one of the state's largest clean energy employers and a company that is actively working to build solar projects in Ohio, HB6, as currently written, will reduce business certainty, and thus deployment, of in-state renewable energy. If adopted, the Bill's proposed elimination of the AEPS would send a clear signal to project developers and investors that OH is turning its back on renewable energy. For this reason, First Solar is opposed to HB6 in its current format.

First Solar was founded by Ohioan Harold McMaster and born in Perrysburg, Ohio. We've invested and innovated here for more than two decades. During this time, most U.S. solar manufacturers shrank, failed or left the U.S. due to intense competition – primarily from heavily subsidized Chinese manufacturers. However, First Solar has tripled down on its commitment to Ohio and continues to invest in its R&D and manufacturing efforts in this market. Since the company's birth, we've contributed well over \$3 billion to Ohio's economy.

Right now, U.S. solar manufacturers, including First Solar, are at an inflection point. Flee or fight, survive or thrive. Over the past three years we have made substantial investments in Ohio, first investing \$400 million to rapidly accelerate development and production of our next-generation Series 6 module at our existing Perrysburg facility. Then, last summer we proudly



broke ground on a new manufacturing facility in Lake Township. The \$400 million facility will begin producing solar panels late this year and will allow First Solar to triple its U.S. manufacturing capacity, creating 500 full-time jobs with an estimated annual payroll of \$30 million. These investments are critical to keeping advanced manufacturing in Ohio competitive with Chinese and other foreign module manufacturers.

Our growth is also enabling the expansion of our Ohio supply chain partners. For example, last fall, as a direct result of First Solar's announced expansion, NSG Pilkington announced the construction of its first new U.S. float glass facility in nearly 40 years. Pilkington's new facility will be located in Troy Township, just 10 miles from First Solar's expansion and the company has publicly stated that this new facility is largely possible because of First Solar's sustained demand for their products.

First Solar opposes the current version of House Bill 6. However, I believe that the Bill's sponsors had good intentions. I would like to offer to roll up my sleeves and work in direct coordination with the sponsors to reframe the Bill so that it can better accomplish what I believe the sponsors' goals were.

First Solar is proud to manufacture our advanced solar photovoltaic modules in Ohio, but the fact is that many states are aggressively working to attract the more than 200,000 jobs in the U.S. solar industry today. The continuing rapid growth of the solar industry and the ongoing competition for industry jobs has created an important opportunity for Ohio. As the largest U.S.-based manufacturer, First Solar hopes Ohio will work towards a sustainable and growing market for utility-scale solar.

I appreciate your time and consideration today, I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

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