

*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 Michael Steere*

April 23, 2019

Chair Stein, Chair O'Brien, and Members of the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation, my name is Mike Steere, resident of Cleveland, Ohio, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today as an opponent to Ohio House Bill 6.

I have come here bearing the assumption that the subcommittee members have as their utmost concern the safety and wellbeing of all Ohioans and that you will consider the immediate and long term effects that the proposed legislation will have on the great state of Ohio and all of us who live here.

If we take this legislation at face value, it appears to be an earnest attempt to make Ohio cleaner. However, it replaces a program that is much better suited to that goal. Of course, this is the renewable portfolio and energy efficiency standards. If your goal is to reduce carbon emissions across Ohio, the solution is not to provide subsidies to projects that still have considerable emissions while excluding renewable projects free of emissions simply because they are smaller or associated with municipalities. The renewable energy standards are the simplest and most effective way of moving Ohio toward cleaner air and water. So why are we presented with this overly complicated and misguided legislation? What other goals could there be? I will tell you.

There is no question that the bill before us has a single, primary purpose. It was conceived for the purpose of rescuing the privately owned electric utility company FirstEnergy and its subsidiary FirstEnergy Solutions from poorly performing investments. This is not a new quest. In fact, this particularly parasitic corporation has operated similarly for decades, playing high risk investments to pay out shareholders while passing frequent losses off to consumers through rate increases and bailouts.

Today, the corporation's weakest assets happen to be the Perry and Davis-Besse nuclear power plants. Unable to operate them profitably, and unwilling to take responsibility for poor investment and management, FirstEnergy once again comes to us begging for another chance. And if we give it to them, absolutely nothing will change. We have shown FirstEnergy that instead of competing to provide the best electric

generation and distribution service in northeast Ohio, they can provide an adequate service at inflated prices and still make off with billions. It stops now. I implore you to oppose this bill. It is time for FirstEnergy to grow up