



Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee  
Chairman Steve Wilson  
Opponent Testimony on Substitute House Bill 6  
Testimony of Becky Campbell  
Manager of Government Affairs, First Solar, Inc.

June 18, 2019

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Williams, and Members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, 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 this bill's intent to support carbon-free energy sources and provide long-term rate stability for Ohioans. However, as a representative of the largest manufacturer, one of the largest utility-scale solar project developers in the country and a company that is actively working to build solar projects in Ohio, I want to caution that HB6, as currently written, will reduce business certainty and thus deployment of in-state renewable energy. If adopted, the bill's elimination of the AEPS would signal to project developers and investors that OH is turning its back on renewable energy instead of encouraging the growth of the fastest growing source of clean energy in the country. For this reason, First Solar is opposed to the current Substitute version of HB6.

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.

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. This \$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 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.

Preserving the current AEPS will provide renewable developers of the fastest growing clean energy resources in the country, like First Solar, the market certainty that they need to continue making large, in-state development investments in Ohio. The AEPS is a **market-driven** policy mechanism that works and is already generating significant interest in in-state renewable energy development. On the other hand, the proposed construct for the Ohio Clean Air Program will provide an arbitrarily determined level of support for an extremely limited number of projects. Proponents for HB6 have suggested that AEPS compliance costs will increase over time. However those claims are not based on reality – as noted in Chairman Randazzo's testimony before this committee two weeks ago, AEPS compliance costs have consistently declined since 2014. A move away from the existing AEPS will cause companies like First Solar to reconsider their development strategies in this market.

First Solar takes no position on whether Ohio's nuclear facilities should receive financial support. If this legislature determines that support for the Ohio's nuclear fleet is necessary and in the best interest of Ohioans, our company will not object. However, we request that that support not come at the cost of a rapidly emerging industry that stands to create significant economic benefits to this market. **First Solar remains opposed to the Substitute version of House Bill 6 because it would cause significant damage for our company, our customers, and the broader renewable energy industry.** Should the authors want to ensure the bill is successful in accomplishing its stated goal to "encourage electricity production and use from clean air resources," First Solar stands ready and willing to work with the authors to develop the necessary amendments to make sure that is the case.

First Solar is proud to manufacture our advanced thin film solar modules in Ohio, and looks forward to further investing in this market by deploying our Ohio-manufactured solar panels in



the ground across the state. 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 and would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Campbell".

Becky Campbell  
Manager, Government Affairs  
First Solar  
Rebecca.Campbell@firstsolar.com  
(480)-236-2085