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Sub. House Bill 114
Testimony - June 6, 2018
Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee

Columbus 2020
Kenny McDonald

Chairman Balderson, Vice-Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for permitting me to testify as an interested party on behalf of Substitute House Bill 114. My name is Kenny McDonald, and I am the President and Chief Economic Officer of Columbus 2020.

Columbus 2020 serves as the economic development organization for the 11-county Columbus Region, working in partnership with state and local partners to generate opportunity and build capacity for economic growth.

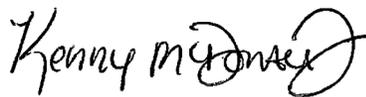
In recent years, Columbus 2020 has seen increasing private sector demand for renewable energy, and we believe Ohio's overall business climate would be enriched if we can offer companies a myriad of affordable, clean energy choices, such as wind energy resources. In addition to workforce preparedness, tax policy, and regulatory reform, companies seeking to do business in our state are increasingly sophisticated energy consumers that want to be able to control their costs and meet public commitments they have made in terms of clean energy usage and their carbon footprint.

As you know, in 2014, a change was made to Ohio's wind turbine mandatory minimum setback law that has acted as a functional moratorium on wind project development in the state by nearly tripling the setback law. In fact, since the change in statute, no new wind farm projects have received a permit to build under this restrictive provision, yet private sector demand for wind energy opportunities continues to grow.

Removing an over-restrictive barrier to development presents an opportunity to create jobs, enhance economic development in the region and throughout the state, in addition to allowing clean energy developers the opportunity to compete to deliver cost-competitive wind energy resources to businesses wishing to purchase this energy source.

Columbus is at the heart of one of our nation's fastest developing regions by creating a dynamic and growing economy. We want to continue to position this region as the strongest environment for attracting businesses and investment through comprehensive regional growth strategies. Fixing this statutory issue would be another step in achieving these goals.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on behalf of Substitute House Bill 114 and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenny McDonald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

KENNY McDONALD, CEcD
President and Chief Economic Officer
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