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**Testimony of Kenny McDonald, Columbus 2020 President and CEO
Ohio Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee**

Chairman LaRose, Vice Chairman Kunze, Ranking Member Tavares and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee, thank you for the opportunity to address the committee in support of legislative changes to fund gas infrastructure expansion. My name is Kenny McDonald and I represent Columbus 2020 and our 11-county region in Central Ohio.

Since I last testified on this three years ago, the economic development landscape has only become more competitive. Ohio is competing with other states and countries that put tremendous resources to secure good jobs and investment for their areas. Ohio has many advantages, including its workforce, utility partners and access to natural resources. However, we must be able to fully leverage those advantages when opportunity presents itself.

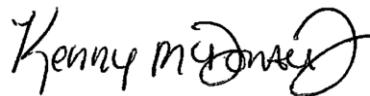
National site selection advisors rate access to utility infrastructure as one of the top priorities of their clients, an observation reinforced by our team's interaction with companies within the region and from around the world. Furthermore, it is important that we work together with partners from state and local government, utilities, and private partners to prepare sites so that job creators can reduce their risk and meet their ever-tightening schedules. Finally, access to pipelines that can help those same industries expand as required is also critically important.

Ohio has many opportunities to grow existing companies and attract new industries to the state if we invest and prepare. Natural gas prices are at historical lows, something that should create an additional advantage to industry in Ohio, but only if we can deliver the gas to the customer.

The current law limits our ability to offset the costs of infrastructure development and proactively prepare sites for investment. There is a logical framework in place that requires an analysis of the potential for job creation or to avoid job loss, as well as capital investment. However, the current law does not provide sufficient financial support to offset costs, which can be substantial. Increasing the infrastructure development rider will allow Ohio to extend infrastructure to retain, grow and attract new investment throughout the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to take any questions the committee may have.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenny McDonald". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "K" and a cursive "McDonald".

Kenny McDonald
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