

## **Testimony John C. Hughes, Jr. -- Training Director Ohio Laborers Training Center**

Good morning and thank you for hearing my testimony.

Establishing the Ohio Clean Air Program is a sensible way to help reduce carbon emissions from the power sector in our state. It is also a pro-worker strategy that will save jobs that exist today and help create new jobs in the future. I am John Hughes, Jr. and, as the Training Director at Ohio Laborers Training Center in Howard, I am keenly interested in policies that promote Ohio job opportunities. I urge the committee to support OCAP by endorsing House Bill 6.

Our active membership totals over 15,000. The Laborers' Training Center trained 5,700 members and apprentice members for family-sustaining union jobs this season. Some of your colleagues have toured our facility, and seen the first-rate training taking place there. I personally invite you to come to see it for yourself.

The jobs our members are qualified to fill, offer workers long-term employment. Our members earn benefits that pay for insurance, retirement and training. All of the benefits are paid for with no government assistance.

Additionally, the wages allow us to support our communities. We are able to patronize businesses that pay the wages of our friends and families. Our tax dollars are important to maintain the infrastructure vital to our neighborhoods.

The loss of these jobs will have an adverse effect on our members, our neighborhoods and our state.

With the passage of House Bill 6, we can expect to see more solid union employment opportunities in Ohio in the clean energy sector. That would not only be great for the workers who take those jobs, but also for our entire state. The workers could go out to eat, buy a new vehicle and all of the other activities that keep our neighbors employed and our neighborhoods vibrant.

By promoting well-trained union workforces in clean energy production, we will ensure that power generating facilities – of all types – are operated efficiently, productively, and safely. Safety is a big emphasis in our training programs and no workers are better prepared to protect themselves, the local community, and the environment than our union members.

The utility bill charge to support the emission-reduction efforts of OCAP would, in most cases, be less than the amount current clean energy mandates require utility consumers to pay. This will also promote Ohio job creation, as industry and consumers will have more money to spend with in-state businesses. Even though the individual savings would be relatively small, together they could do big things for the Ohio economy and employment base.

America's unions are firm believers in investing in worker training. Money spent on training is paid back many times over in increased productivity and the reduction of lost time caused by on-the-job accidents and injuries. Along those same lines, investing in zero-emission energy in Ohio will also pay back big dividends in terms of cleaner air, better health, and the economic boost that comes from a diverse mix of power generators, working in tandem to supply consumers with energy that protects our environment.

House Bill 6 and OCAP will protect existing jobs while laying the foundation for new jobs in the power sector. Please support the passage of House Bill 6.

Thank you.