

Good Morning/Afternoon Co-Chairman Stein, Co-Chairman O'Brien. Thank you for allowing me to speak before the House Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation. My name is Lee Blackburn. I'm a constituent and I represent tens of thousands of senior citizens who reside in Ohio, and who, like me, live on a modest fixed income. I've come here today to testify against House Bill 6, the Ohio Clean Air Program, as it penalizes me and the millions of other Ohioans that live on a modest income as it amounts to a regressive tax that only benefits those who are the most inefficient and wasteful with energy.

Indeed, HB 6 amounts to a quadruple whammy for low to moderate income individuals like me. First, we'll be charged an additional \$2.50 per month and receive absolutely nothing in return.

Second, because it's a regressive tax, I'll pay 4 times as much percentage-wise as a typical ratepayer, since I use less than 200 KWh per month, as do many of the poor and seniors.

Third, since the renewable and energy efficiency programs are progressive, the savings for me by eliminating them amounts to just 80 cents. So, their removal does very little for me and doesn't come close to offsetting the useless \$2.50 charge.

Fourth, by eliminating the renewable and energy efficiency programs, you're actually taking away a program that saves ratepayers money. A conservative estimate is savings of some \$900 million annually by the four major investor-owned electric utilities. That's equivalent to avoiding the cost of a 1,000 MW gas plant with its millions of tons of CO2. Without these savings, you would need more gas plants and that would certainly undercut the alleged purpose of the Ohio Clean Air Program.

This bill will obviously not benefit millions of low to moderate income Ohioans and quite frankly, it's hard to determine exactly who it will benefit.

Certainly not FirstEnergy and their nuclear reactors. We are in the third year of a three-year, \$204 million annual subsidy the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio provided to FirstEnergy in October, 2016. Based on projections, the Ohio Clean Air Program will replace less than 75% of that amount or about \$150 million. If FirstEnergy couldn't keep their nuclear reactors out of bankruptcy with a \$204 million subsidy, they certainly won't be able to do it with \$150 million. Perhaps that's the reason they requested over half a billion annually from the PUCO.

As for jobs, while it's always a travesty when someone loses a job, the closing of Davis Besse and Perry Nuclear Power Stations will result in the loss of employment for some workers but many will be retained for cleaning up and shutting down the plants. Those jobs that are lost will be a drop in the bucket compared to the number of jobs lost in the retail sector alone, with the closing of thousands of stores by the likes of Sear, Kmart, Radio Shack, Toys R Us, Mattress Firm and Payless ShoeSource to name a few. Yet I don't see a proposal for bailing out any of these companies.

Finally, the closing of Davis Besse and Perry will be a burden on taxing authorities and school districts within their jurisdiction but over the years, numerous school districts and taxing authorities have gone through similar problems with the closings of a variety of manufacturing plants and industrial facilities. Yet they survived without the benefit of a state-sponsored subsidy.

In conclusion, HB 6 is bad politics and appears to be an answer in search of a problem.

Thank you.