

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

**House Bill 6
Proponent Testimony**

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Mayor Dan Horrigan
City of Akron
Suite 200 Municipal Building
166 South High Street
Akron, Ohio 44308
330-375-2345
Mayor@AkronOhio.gov

Chairman Wilson, Vice-Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Energy and Public Utilities Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 6. As the Mayor of Akron since 2016, I strongly support this legislation. It will provide support to zero-emission energy generation facilities through the Ohio Clean Air Program. While this Program will support a variety of energy generating resources, I want to focus today on two plants that are of particular significance: the Davis-Besse and Perry nuclear power stations operated by Akron-based FirstEnergy Solutions.

Davis-Besse and Perry provide a range of important benefits to the state, from jobs and tax revenue to cleaner air and grid reliability. These two facilities support over 4,000 primary and secondary jobs across Ohio and contribute more than half a billion dollars to Ohio's GDP, paying \$30 million annually in state and local taxes. These jobs support Ohio families and the tax revenue helps fund schools and safety services. If these plants are allowed to close prematurely, the communities in Lake and Ottawa counties, and my hometown of Akron, will experience devastating loss of opportunity, both economic and philanthropic. Our economy is not nearly as dynamic and adaptive as it needs to be to properly compete in the global marketplace. While Akron and Summit County leadership are working hard to address these issues, the ripple effect of these two plants closing would mean great economic hardship for our region, and quite frankly, we cannot afford to play chicken with major economic contributors located in the city I lead. These plants currently spend \$45 million annually with vendors and suppliers located in every corner of Ohio; these businesses will be hard-hit by the loss of these facilities as well.

As policymakers, we have a duty to preserve clean air for the next generation of Ohioans. The Davis-Besse and Perry nuclear plants represent 90 percent of zero-emission electricity in our state. Nuclear energy produces no sulfur dioxide or carbon dioxide air emissions. The power

generation lost by the premature closure of these plants would likely be replaced with coal or natural gas, and ultimately contribute 9 million more tons of carbon dioxide to Ohio's atmosphere annually. This emission increase is equivalent to a 50% increase in the number of registered vehicles on Ohio's roads. I firmly believe that Ohio cannot attain the goal of providing clean air to our citizens without the continued operation of these nuclear facilities.

If this legislation is passed into law, a reorganized FirstEnergy Solutions will continue to own and operate these plants from its headquarters in Akron. There is too much at stake, for our city and the state of Ohio, to allow Davis-Besse and Perry to close prematurely. I encourage you to act swiftly to ensure all Ohioans continue to enjoy the economic and environmental benefits nuclear power provides.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present my testimony.