

Mark Douglas, Jr., President, Tri-County Building & Construction Trades Council

Senate Committee on Energy and Public Utilities

June 12, 2019

Members of the Energy and Public Utilities Committee: thank you for allowing me to provide this testimony in support of House Bill 6. I am the President of the Tri-County Building & Construction Trades Council, serving Summit, Portage, and Medina Counties. Along with more than 40 other labor unions statewide, the Tri-County Building & Construction Trades Council is a member of the Ohio Clean Energy Jobs Alliance. Together, we represent Ohio's roofers, bricklayers, carpenters, pipefitters, sheet metal workers, painters, electricians, plumbers, cement masons, and more. I am here to encourage your full support for, and swift passage of, House Bill 6.

The Tri-County Building & Construction Trades Council and other union members of the Ohio Clean Energy Jobs Alliance represent thousands of hardworking Ohioans who help support both routine maintenance operations, such as refueling, as well as other special projects at both the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station and Perry Nuclear Power Plant. Altogether between these two facilities, some 4,300 jobs are supported either directly or indirectly.

However, if House Bill 6 fails to pass, these jobs—and the hardworking Ohio families they help support—would be threatened as both of Ohio's nuclear facilities would be forced to shutter their doors prematurely. You can imagine the impact this would have not only on the 700+ workers that each plant employs in-house, but the thousands of others in the building and construction trades industry that rely on a vibrant nuclear power industry. Where will these hardworking men and women go if these jobs disappear? Considering the average nuclear plant employs 500 more people than the average natural gas plant, it's not as though these workers will just be able to transition to natural gas-fired facilities.

What will happen if House Bill 6 does not pass is these workers will be out of a job. Many of them may be forced to move or relocate, potentially leaving Ohio for good and taking their skills with them. As our pool of skilled tradespeople starts to shrink, attracting new businesses and industries to our state will only become that much harder. We should be doing everything we can to attract, train, and develop the next generation of skilled trade workers in order to ensure Ohio's workforce—as well as our communities and local economies—remains strong and vibrant.

The Tri-County Building & Construction Trades Council along with dozens of other trade unions represent thousands of highly skilled workers that help ensure plant projects are completed on time and on budget. About every two years, each plant closes down temporarily to refuel, perform routine maintenance, and conduct other preventative safety measures. These planned closures can last several weeks and require thousands of additional contract workers, including from the Tri-County Building & Construction Trades Council. While temporary in nature, these opportunities for employment help our workers put food on the table and provide an economic boost for local economies and communities. Local businesses from hotels and motels to restaurants, grocery stores, and gas stations all get a significant bump when these contract workers relocate temporarily, contributing to the vitality of many of the towns and communities surrounding the plants Lake and Ottawa counties.

Additionally, many more Ohio communities benefit year-round from the more than \$30 million in state and local taxes that the Davis-Besse and Perry nuclear plants pay—not to mention the \$45 million they spend with Ohio-based vendors and suppliers. All of these contributions help keep workers in related industries gainfully employed while contributing to a robust Ohio economy. According to one study, closing down these plants early could reduce our state's GDP by more than \$500 million annually.

On behalf of the Tri-County Building & Construction Trades Council, I urge you to support House Bill 6 and help ensure its swift passage. If passed, it will help protect the thousands of jobs that

Ohio's nuclear plants support while also ensuring communities across the state continue to benefit from the economic contributions these facilities provide. A vote for House Bill 6 is a vote for Ohio's hardworking union members and the families they support.

Thank you,

Mark Douglas, Jr.

President, Tri-County Building & Construction Trades Council