

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

Chair: Steve Wilson

Written Opponent Testimony on Substitute House Bill 6

Written Testimony of Rev. Joan VanBecelaere and 19 additional Ohio clergy

Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio and 19 Ohio Congregations and Organizations

June 15, 2019

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Williams, and Members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee;

As faith leaders and clergy in Ohio, we strongly oppose Ohio House Bill 6 and any legislation that would effectively repeal Ohio's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) and Energy Efficiency Resource Standard (EERS). These two policies have saved the people of Ohio millions on their energy bills, reduced carbon emissions pollution in the state, generated new jobs for our people, and offered major health benefits to all of our children and many older adults.

Out of genuine concern for the lives of the people of Ohio, we urge you to vote against HB 6.

The EERS alone has facilitated over \$4.5 billion in energy savings for our Ohio citizens since 2009. HB 6 will dismantle this policy, denying low-income and other families in Ohio much needed assistance in investing in home energy efficiency.

Strong clean air standards are about health. A rollback of Ohio's RPS and EERS would destroy the health benefits that these standards provide to all Ohioan, especially children and vulnerable older adults. These benefits include prevention of over 44,000 asthma attacks, 2,400 asthma-related emergency room visits, 4,400 heart attacks and over 2,800 premature deaths in Ohio attributable to coal-plant pollution.

HB 6 also puts Ohio jobs at risk: more than 112,000 Ohioans are employed in the clean energy sector. The 80,000 Ohioans employed in the energy efficiency sector stand to be impacted the most.

And HB 6 would increase Ohio's environmentally dangerous carbon footprint. The bill will do away with Ohio's RPS and EERS which together are reducing Ohio's reliance on coal fired power plants. These policies, if left in place, would reduce Ohio's annual carbon pollution by about 10 million tons between 2017 and 2029—equivalent to avoiding a year's worth of emissions from 1 million homes' energy use. Our faith calls on us all to be good stewards of our environment and reduce our carbon footprint for the benefit of all who share our fragile earth.

We write to express our strong opposition to HB 6 and any legislation that would weaken Ohio's clean energy and clean air standards. We recognize the many benefits of moving to renewable energy and energy efficiency standards and urge you to vote against this legislation to protect Ohioans current and future health, environment, savings and jobs, for the sake of our children and our children's children.

Please do not hesitate to contact Rev. Joan Van Becelaere with Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio with any questions.

Sincerely,

Rev. Joan VanBecelaere, Executive Director  
Columbus  
Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio  
Ohio Poor People's Campaign

Rev. Marcia Dinkins, Executive Director  
Columbus  
Ohio Interfaith Power and Light

Rev. Dan Clark  
Columbus  
Faith in Public Life and St. John's United Church of Christ

Rev. Renee Ruchotzke  
Kent  
Central East Region, Unitarian Universalist Association

Rev. Patricia Hart, Interim Senior Minister  
Rocky, River  
West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church

Rev. Dr. V. Elaine Strawn  
Wooster  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Wayne County

Rev. Kellie Kelly, Minister  
Dayton  
Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Rev. Dr. TK Barger  
Toledo  
First Unitarian Church of Toledo

Rev. Tim Temerson  
Fairlawn  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Akron

Rev. Denis Letourneau Paul  
Kirtland

East Shore Unitarian Universalist Church

Rev. Dr. Rina Shere  
Cleveland  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Cleveland

Rev. Mary Grigolia  
Oberlin and North Olmstead  
Oberlin Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
Olmsted Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Rev. Kathryn Hawbaker  
Marietta  
First Unitarian Universalist Society of Marietta

Rev. Don Rollins  
Athens  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Athens, OH

Rev. Sam Byrd  
Westfield Center  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Westfield Center

Rev. Kathleen Fowler  
Columbus  
First Unitarian Universalist Church  
Affiliated Community Minister

Rev. Jeffrey B. Gamblee, retired  
Westerville  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus (member)  
Ohio Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival  
Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio

Rev. Lynda Smith, retired  
Columbus  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus (member)  
Faith in Public Life  
Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio

Rev. Sylvia Howe, retired  
Columbus  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus (member)

Rev. Paul L'Herrou, retired  
Columbus  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus (member)