**LIME ENERGY’S COMMENTS REGARDING HOUSE BILL 6 BEFORE THE SENATE ENERGY AND PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE**

**June 2019**

**Who is Lime Energy?**

My name is Bryan Feathers, and I am Ohio Program Manager at Lime Energy. I am a current resident of Ohio and have been for 48 years. I raised two children here and currently have five grandchildren growing up in the state. On behalf of Lime Energy, I appreciate the opportunity to speak today.

Lime Energy is known here in Ohio, and nationally, as leader in commercial energy efficiency delivery; we specialize in helping utility companies to serve their hardest to reach small business customers, which struggle to take advantage of energy saving opportunities. Lime Energy operates out of Columbus and Cincinnati. Late in 2018, we became part of the Willdan family of companies, joining a firm with other affiliates operating in Ohio with strong commercial efficiency capabilities. Together, Willdan and Lime employ 100 people serving Ohio utility energy efficiency programs, and our business creates thousands more subcontractor and other supply chain jobs in the state.

**Why is Energy Efficiency Important?**

Energy efficiency in buildings is a deeply underappreciated energy savings solution. Efficiency is always the lowest-cost, carbon-free energy resource. It lowers residents’ and businesses’ energy bills; and it improves air quality and health outcomes. Energy efficiency is subtle and takes many forms. It is in basements (heating equipment) and ceilings (lighting). It appears as small objects on walls (thermostats) and disappears behind them (air sealing).

Energy efficiency is also clean energy’s workhorse, employing the largest share of the “green collar” workforce. Just last week, 2019 U.S. Energy Employment Report[[1]](#footnote-1) revealed that energy efficiency jobs account for 2.3 million of the 3.3 million clean energy jobs in the nation. According to the same report, the energy efficiency industry employs more than 82,000 Ohioans, far more than the number of jobs that will be saved under HB6.

Energy efficiency is also a fruitful investment for Ohio’s utility ratepayers. Since the state passed its energy efficiency mandates in 2008, Ohio residents and businesses have received $2.65 in benefits for every dollar spent on energy efficiency. Energy efficiency programs have a direct impact the residents and communities in Ohio. Lime Energy works directly in communities across the state, bringing the benefits of energy efficiency to the small businesses that are the backbone of the local economy.

In Ohio, our work alone has contributed:

* 6,811 small businesses have been provided facility upgrades
* $ 50.4 million worth of investment in small business facilities
* $ 17.2 million saved on energy bills by businesses each year
* 2,814 direct and indirect jobs created

Eliminating Ohio’s energy efficiency resource standard will have a direct, negative impact on the residents and businesses of Ohio. Preserving Ohio’s energy efficiency programs, however, will sustain many of these benefits created by reducing energy consumption. In addition to job creation and economic development, energy efficiency helps improve air quality and health outcomes, makes businesses more competitive, and improves the facilities in which our neighbors live and work.

Lime Energy is not arguing against subsidies for energy plants; we only seek to preserve the important energy efficiency programs that slated for elimination under the legislation. These programs allow your constituents to improve and expand their businesses, to create jobs and hire more constituents, and to invest more in the communities you serve, especially in an environment of rising rates. Subsidies for power plants don’t make energy efficiency expendable; after new customer charges go into effect, energy efficiency will become more essential than ever for Ohio residents and businesses.

Lime Energy sincerely appreciates the opportunity to testify and to submit these written comments today. We look forward to continued participation as a stakeholder for the advancement of Ohio’s energy economy.

1. The [2019 U.S. Energy Employment Report (2019 USEER)](https://www.usenergyjobs.org/), published by the Energy Futures Initiative (EFI) in partnership with the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) is the recent edition of an annual report once published by the U.S. Department of Energy until the effort was discontinued by the Trump Administration. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)