

## Repeal HB 6 Dr. Randi Pokladnik

Part two in the continuing trail of lies of HB 6 is now underway. Ohioans and the rest of the nation now know about the 60-million-dollar bribery scam that would bail out FirstEnergy Solutions' two aging nuclear power plants: Davis Besse and Perry and the "Ohio Valley Electric Corporation's two 1950s-era coal-fired plants."

For First Energy it was a great investment, for Ohio's citizens it was another example of how Ohio's politicians have done everything in their power to stop renewable energy from getting anywhere in our state.

HB 6 was passed even though countless citizens, environmental groups, and renewable energy companies came out against it. This bill effectively cuts Ohio's energy portfolio and discourages green renewable energy from coming to our state. It also does away with energy efficiency standards, a sector that provides 80,000 jobs in the state.

The passage of this bill and Governor DeWine's subsequent signing came as no surprise. The bill's biggest backer, First Energy Solutions stands to gain \$150 million per year to bailout its aging Davis-Besse and Perry nuclear power plants. According to Open Secrets, an organization that tracks political contributions, this company and related SuperPACs spent considerable amounts of money in the 2018 elections. A "dark money group" backing First Energy spent \$9.5 million in television ads, and the Columbus Dispatch reported, it "got a good return on its investment."

Sadly, according to a 2017 US Energy Information Association report, Ohio ranks 49th out of 50 in the nation for solar and wind production. Ohio's renewable energy standards pale in comparison to some states that are already pledged to 100 percent renewables by 2045 (Washington, California, New Mexico, Maine, DC). A recent article by Inside Climate News states that seeing the anti-renewable sentiment in Ohio, renewable jobs and projects will go to neighboring states such as Michigan. Even South Carolina and Georgia are "more forward thinking when it comes to renewable energy."

Ohio's taxpayers will be paying for bad decisions made by FirstEnergy. The bill was never intended to be about clean energy or staving off the climate crisis. Ohio should be investing in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and training for our students to work in the green energy sector and green energy technology.

Once again, Ohio politicians put the possibility of a thriving green energy future for the state on the back-burner as they sold out to the industries padding their campaign bank accounts.

When the world is on fire, Ohio's politicians and energy regulators continue to sit back and deny the citizens of the state the opportunities to be afforded by green energy. It is time to trash HB 6 and move Ohio into the future.

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