

Testimony of Mark E Coppeler

Ottawa County Commissioner

Before the Ohio Senate

Committee on Energy and Public Utilities

Hearing on Ohio Senate Bill 346

November 29, 2020

Chairman Wilson, Vice-Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide written interested party testimony on Senate Bill 346 (SB346) to repeal HB 6 of the 133rd Ohio General Assembly. HB 6 will provide much needed support to Ohio's two nuclear energy plants, Davis Besse and the Perry nuclear plant.

It is disappointing that HB6 is under consideration to be repealed. Legislators should think long and hard about the actions they may take. Our nation has never had a clear energy policy and with the recent Presidential election the direction our nation may choose should be of concern to all.

If the election results hold and a Biden/Harris administration shapes our nations future energy policy, the days of cheap gas and oil may come to an end. A push towards more green energy and an end to fossil fuels would position nuclear energy as an important and much needed energy producer.

Reliable baseload energy production is vital for manufacturing and to meet the needs of the State of Ohio. The Davis Besse and Perry Nuclear plants can operate up to two years without refueling, produce zero carbon emissions and when operating they are producing 24/7 regardless of time of day or weather conditions. Some of the "Green Energy" producers may have a zero-carbon output when they are producing, but they are constrained by time of day and weather and cannot be relied on for baseload energy production.

The saving grace for natural gas is that it is cheap at this time. As an hvac and electrical contractor I've been working construction since the late 1970s and I remember when there was a moratorium on natural gas connections due to short supply. I also remember in the late 1980s when natural gas prices were so high that manufacturers had to increase efficiencies to make gas furnace operation affordable. How soon we forget just how volatile natural gas prices can be and a change in administration may have an adverse effect on the future of oil and natural gas.

Nuclear energy needs to have a place in Ohio's energy portfolio as a clean and reliable energy provider. No other source of electrical production can compare. With the uncertainty of our nation's future energy policy HB6 provides support to keep the Davis Besse and Perry plants in operation. If natural gas prices rise then nuclear energy would be able to not only compete, but could lead the way.

Nuclear electrical energy production needs to continue in Ohio or the consumer and the nation will pay.
Passage of HB6 was the right thing to do and it should stand as is.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

Mark E Coppeler

Ottawa County Commissioner