

April 27, 2019

Dear Senator Eklund,

This is to serve as a written testimony in opposition of SB 33, which is a dangerous assault on civil liberties and free speech. This bill is clearly unconstitutional, and fundamentally violates our First Amendment rights. This bill is vague, and inconsistent with the Ohio Revised Code. It violates due process by arbitrarily – with no definition- singling out certain infrastructure that it merely labels, with *no justification or definition*, “critical.” It thus targets people and *even more so* organizations deemed to support actions at these arbitrarily labeled sites for unfair extra punishment, a violation of due process. This bill is unnecessary, since trespass is already covered by Ohio law.

The legislation is clearly meant to intimidate individuals and, even more dangerously, non-profit organizations that organize people to speak out against assaults by the oil and gas industry against our communities, climate, and public health. Under the bill, organizations can be held liable for others’ actions through guilt by association, with ten times greater penalties than penalties individuals would receive. This can only be intended to squelch environmental advocacy, so essential at this time of accelerating climate chaos.

If this bill is passed, I fear for the youth who are rising up to protect their right for a healthy future. We must ensure that they have the right to freely speak their minds and peacefully protest for a more sustainable and better way of life than the one they are facing due to the pollution oil and gas industry.

I urge you to stand up for our First Amendments Rights and do all in your power to stop this dangerous and unconstitutional bill.

Thank you,

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