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Testimony in opposition to HB 434
February 14, 2022

HB 434 would create a new state agency, the Ohio Nuclear Development Authority (ONDA), to oversee the development of new nuclear technologies, especially molten salt reactors. The bill is in response to the demands of eGeneration, a company that is pushing molten salt reactors. If the bill is passed, eGeneration would become eligible for state funding and would benefit financially even if commercially viable nuclear technologies are not produced. The ONDA would be housed in the Ohio Department of Development where its members would be appointed with very little, if any, public scrutiny. The bill says very little about how nuclear development would proceed but would make the state liable for nuclear waste cleanup. It should be noted that molten salt reactors have received little support from private investors because the reactors are prone to corrosion and subsequent leakage.

Ohio does not need to use precious public funds to prop up the nuclear industry. Renewable energy technologies have developed to the point where they can satisfy most, if not all, of our energy needs. Ohio would be much better served if the state removed some of the barriers that the legislature has created to the expansion of wind and solar. It is ironic that state officials are so critical of the potential environmental impacts of wind and solar and yet are ready to embrace such obviously risky technologies as molten salt reactors. Adding such reactors to the already toxic mix of fracking wells and oil/gas pipelines in the state will only jeopardize future business investment in Ohio.

I urge you to oppose HB 434.