



House Public Utilities Committee  
HB 260 - Proponent Testimony  
Sarah Spence, Executive Director  
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Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the House Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 260 (HB 260), which would issue refunds to utility customers who have been improperly charged by their utilities. My name is Sarah Spence, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Ohio Conservative Energy Forum (OHCEF).

OHCEF was founded in 2015 to provide a forum for conservatives to discuss a diverse, all-of-the-above energy portfolio – one that includes not only existing sources of traditional energy generation, but one that also seeks to expand the development of clean and renewable energy sources. OHCEF believes that clean energy and energy made clean through technology can strengthen both our economy and our national security while providing unmatched opportunities for innovation and job creation.

OHCEF believes that energy use is a necessity for all people, businesses, and organizations across Ohio and the country. As a vital commodity, any progress on having fair, lower costs for ratepayers will have positive impacts on the economy. Since 2009, Ohio citizens and businesses have paid out \$1.5 billion to Ohio's utility companies for charges that have been deemed to be unreasonable, unlawful, imprudent, or otherwise improper by the Supreme Court with no recourse to recover those dollars - roughly \$100 million a year that could have been otherwise invested in Ohio's economy.

HB 260 seeks to remedy this situation by making all charges paid by customers to a public utility that are later found to be unreasonable, unlawful, imprudent, or otherwise improper by the Supreme Court or other authority to be fully refunded to the customers no later than one year following the issuance of that authority's decision. The legislation also requires the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) to order the refunds and accrued interest to be allocated to customer classes in the same proportion as the charges were originally collected.

We all understand and agree that electricity rate making, utility regulation, and our power grid are complex and making decisions to meet the energy needs of the future can be complicated.



Given this, it makes sense that we create a reasonable system for Ohio citizens and businesses to receive refunds on decisions for charges that are found to be unreasonable.

OHCEF believes that HB 260 is much needed legislation that helps bring balance into the regulatory process. We look forward to working with the committee as this bill moves through the legislative process. Thank you again for allowing me to submit written testimony in support of HB 260.