



**Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Schuring, and Ranking Member Williams
Proponent Testimony on Senate Bill 117
Testimony of Rachael Belz
Ohio Consumers Power Alliance**

May 12, 2021

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams, and Members of the Energy and Public Utilities Committee, my name is Rachael Belz, and I am the Director of the Ohio Consumers Power Alliance, a project of the Ohio Citizen Action Education Fund dedicated to educating Ohio's energy consumers around opportunities to diversify Ohio's energy portfolio and policy actions that could impact consumer choice and spending. Our members fully support Senate Bill 117.

Ohio Consumers Power Alliance was opposed to House Bill 6 when it was being debated in 2019 and strongly supported the efforts to fully repeal the legislation once it was revealed that the bill was at the center of a \$61 million bribery scandal. What began as bad public policy soon became bad public policy born of corruption and collusion.

While the Ohio General Assembly has passed legislation to remove the nuclear subsidies and decoupling provisions from House Bill 6, there has still been no full repeal. That means the coal subsidies created for the Ohio Valley Electric Corporation (OVEC) included in House Bill 6 – which have been estimated to be worth \$700 million — remain in place, to be funded by Ohio consumers. These dollars are intended to bailout two dirty coal-fired power plants, one of which is even located in Indiana.

In fact, House Bill 6 expanded the bailout of the OVEC coal plants to require FirstEnergy customers to pay for the bailout starting in January 2020. Every dollar collected under these subsidies from FirstEnergy customers is handed over to AEP, Duke, and Dayton Power & Light to further subsidize the bailouts for those companies. FirstEnergy customers bear the brunt of bad utility policy on multiple fronts, but you can change that with your support of Senate Bill 117.

FirstEnergy and other utility giants should not receive any benefit from legislation passed under the shadow of corruption and lies. Dollars collected through an OVEC bailout should

never leave the pockets of hardworking Ohioans and should never be used to line the pockets of wealthy executives.

Corruption made HB 6 possible, and we have continuously called on members of the General Assembly to right this wrong and repeal all components of the bill. Repealing the OVEC subsidies included in HB 6 is an important step in restoring faith in our government by standing up for real, everyday Ohio consumers.

I strongly urge you to remove the OVEC subsidies remaining from HB 6 and support the people of Ohio by supporting Senate Bill 117.