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House Resolution 469 House Testimony
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee
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[STEIN]

Chairman Hall, Vice-chair Lear, Ranking Member Rogers, and the entire Energy and Natural Resource committee. Thank you for your timely hearing of House Resolution 469. We stand before you today to share the dire consequences of the recently adopted Federal EPA Clean Air Act rules 111 B and D. Many of you are aware that we share a grave concern that Ohio and the PJM region as a whole, will soon see with high probability the lights go out in Ohio (the lights go out in Georgia might sound more familiar). For the past two years our regional grid operator PJM (consisting of the 13 states and the District of Columbia), NERC (The North American Electric Reliability Corporation), and our local grid operators have been increasingly sounding the alarm. To amplify the concern further, 25 electric Co-ops have recently shared with their stakeholders that now might be a good time to install a generator due to the possibility of insufficient generation in the coming months and years ahead.

My friends, how did we get here? One only need to look to California and Texas to see the trends. A war on fossil fuels, which first predicated the premature closure of existing coal plants. Now these new EPA rules aim to stop future natural gas generation by creating the impossible goal of zero CO2 by 2035. Under these new rules it is likely that NO NEW COMBINED CYCLE NATURAL GAS PLANT WILL BE BUILT. As demand skyrockets, and existing coal plants are shuttered, what are we left with for our future?

The Federal government would have to believe that base-load dispatchable generators will be replaced with tens of thousands of government-subsidized intermittent solar panels and wind turbines. Some might say FREE ENERGY, however California with the second highest electrical rates in the lower 48 might beg to differ. California ratepayers pay 32 cent per kilowatt (close to triple Ohio's rates) and that when it's available. In California some days load-demand out paces generation and people are told, don't charge your cars, or turn down your air conditioning or worse manufactures are forced to curtail operations. You might say, "Well, not in Ohio!" Unfortunately, that would be untrue—remember back to December 23 and 24 of 2022. Ohio was in the midst of winter storm Elliott. The extreme cold and wind chill had wind turbines shuttered, snow covered solar asleep, and our gas generators struggling to get fuel to power our lives.

Many were asked to shed power, businesses were closed, and we were asked to shut off our Christmas trees on Christmas Eve. Could it have been worse? Yes, Ohio almost lost over 2,000 megawatts of thermo-generation, not from coal or natural gas but from our two NUCLEAR GENERATORS. Additionally, the two OVEC generation plants provided over 2400 megawatts of coal fired power and are responsible in part for Ohio's ability to keep the light on for us all during winter storm Elliot. Isn't it interesting how sometimes good policy gets muddied with bad actors?

[BLASDEL]

All of this is said to underscore the fragile nature of our grid. Power is available only second to second and storage is fleeting and costly. We must have an adequate supply of dispatchable generators to meet Ohio's and our region's needs. The recent EPA rules will end all fossil fuel construction for the foreseeable future. House Resolution 469 is demanding the federal government to STOP THE MADNESS!

In a recent Reuters article - "Attorney Generals from 27 U.S. states and industry trade groups are suing the Environmental Protection Agency, seeking to block a landmark rule requiring sweeping reductions in carbon emissions from existing coal-fired power plants and new natural gas plants. The rule, finalized by the Biden's administration last month was challenged in multiple lawsuits filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, including one by 25 states spearheaded by West Virginia and Indiana and another by Ohio and Kansas. Electric utility, mining and coal industry trade groups also filed lawsuits."

Our own Ohio Senate recently passed Senate Resolution 296, which is similar to this resolution before you today. It passed with bi-partisan support out of committee 9-2 and passed out of their chambers again with bi-partisan support and a vote of 27-4.

Help us stop the overreach of the Federal EPA by asking them to eliminate rules that will be detrimental to Ohio and our country. Ohio and our PJM region must be allowed the ability to provide reliable and affordable electricity for rate payers across our state without interference from and overreaching federal government.

Thank you for your time and we will be happy to answer any questions.