

81st House District

Henry County

Columbus Office

Vern Riffe Center
77 S. High Street
14th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111
(614) 466-3760
Rep81@ohiohouse.gov
www.ohiohouse.gov

Committees

Finance
Health and Human Services
Government Oversight
Public Utilities
Rules and Reference

James Hoops
State Representative

Good morning, Chairman Stein, Ranking Member Weinstein and fellow members of the House Public Utilities Committee. Representative Ray and I are pleased to bring before you HB 197 The Community Solar Pilot Program. This bill is a continuation of the work that my colleagues Brian Baldrige and Laura Lanese put in on HB 450 in the previous general assembly.

The goal of this legislation is to create a small-scale solar program that seeks to be a part of the solution to Ohio's energy generation and aging infrastructure needs. This bill will add a total of 1750 MW of generation and will use private capital, rather than rate payer dollars, to upgrade the grid. Additionally, this bill prioritizes the development of community solar on brownfield and distressed land. The brownfield portion of our bill honors Representative Baldrige and Lanese's original vision to bring new generation to areas where power plants once were.

HB 197 instructs the PUCO to promulgate rules that allow developers to connect small scale solar arrays to the utility's distribution infrastructure creating much needed upgrades in the process. The bill also instructs PUCO to develop robust consumer protections and establishes strong regulatory oversight of the program by the commission.

From there, developers will sign up "subscribers" who will receive a credit on their bill for their portion of that array's generation. That credit will provide savings on their bill between 10% - 15% every month.

This version of the Community Solar Pilot Program is the product of feedback from various stakeholders, and I look forward to continuing to work with all parties to create the best program for Ohio's energy consumers.

With that I would like to turn it over to my joint-sponsor Representative Ray to share her thoughts.