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## Committees

Government Oversight Committee  
Insurance Committee  
Public Utilities Committee  
Rules and Reference Committee

## Sharon A. Ray

State Representative  
Assistant Majority Whip

Good morning Chairman Stein, Ranking Member Weinstein and fellow members of the House Public Utilities Committee. As Representative Hoops shared, this bill has incorporated several changes that were suggested throughout many interested party meetings. We have phased in the program's implementation equally over four years and proportionally across the utilities by distribution territory.

Because private capital must be invested, we see this legislation as a free market solution to Ohio's all-of-the-above energy generation needs. Developers may not go back to the PUCO and ask for rate recovery should they make a bad business decision. There are also intentional consumer protections detailed in the bill to ensure Ohioans can engage in this new program with confidence.

Ohio has seen significant investment in manufacturing and supply chain elements of wind and solar, the Community Solar Pilot Program will continue to support those investments. OH, currently imports a significant amount of its electricity, so implementing this pilot program will allow us to watch and learn in a measured approach how distributed generation can help modernize and add resiliency to the grid overall.

Community Solar development is anticipated to spread across Ohio. Over half of our counties will see the benefits of these small-scale projects. Which translates into landowner lease payments, jobs for local contractors, and all the ancillary spending inherently from development projects.

Ohio University recently published an Economic Impact study that aggregates the impact of this program across the state, and they found it would deliver \$5.6 Billion in overall economic impact with \$490 million being generated in the form of local taxes and fees over the life of the projects.

These projects will be limited in size so the challenges we saw last fall with large utility scale projects are inherently addressed and will not face the same public opposition. All projects in the program must be permitted through the local permitting authority.

I look forward to continuing to work with members of the committee and interested parties as we work towards making Ohio the 22nd state to allow 3<sup>rd</sup> Party community solar development.

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