

Dear Chairman Stein, Vice Chair Robb Blasdel, Ranking Member Weinstein and Members of the House Public Utilities Committee,

I write to you as a proud representative of the Appalachian farming heritage that has shaped my family for generations and as a professor of psychology at Capital University.

My family's roots run deep in Washington County, spanning five generations. In farming this land for corn, beans, and hay, we have witnessed the beauty, resilience, and challenges of this land, and we take great pride in our cultural heritage. Appalachia is not only a place; it's a way of life, an ethos of hard work, community, and a deep connection to the land. My dad has always told me: "We can visit a courthouse and find our name on a deed that says we own the land, but something far greater, more sacred than us truly owns the land. That's why we should consider ourselves the fortunate caretakers of the land for a few centuries if we are that lucky. Take care of the land, and the land will take care of you."

In my professional role, I have had the privilege of studying human behavior, cognition, and the psychological well-being of individuals and communities. I have seen firsthand how the economic landscape of Appalachia has evolved over the years, and I understand the importance of balancing progress with preserving the unique character of this region.

I am writing today to express my support for HB197, which holds significant potential for the people of Appalachia. This bill not only represents an opportunity to diversify our energy sources and contribute to a more sustainable future but also offers a chance for economic growth and job creation in our region.

I am collaborating with Nicholas Minekime, Founder of Sunrise Mountain Partners, LLC, and his firm's long-term financial backers at CleanCapital, with whom Nicholas is developing over 25 other community sun farms in Ohio. Nicholas is a Dublin native, a graduate of Dublin Coffman High School, and a proud Buckeye. We have entered into a long-term lease agreement with his company and are enthusiastic about hosting one or more community solar farms on our property.

Appalachia has long been a provider of vital resources to our nation, and I believe it is time for us to harness the power of solar energy as a valuable addition to our legacy. The development of solar energy projects, such as those proposed under HB197, can provide new economic avenues for our communities while respecting the natural beauty and resilience of our land.

I wholeheartedly endorse House Bill 197 and its potential to positively impact the lives of Appalachians now and for future generations. It is a step towards a more independent and prosperous future for our beloved region.

If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I stand ready to support the passage of HB 197 and the brighter future it can bring to Appalachia.

Sincerely,

Janette "Jette" McDonald