

Proponent Testimony Stephanie Thomason House Bill 197
House Public Utilities Committee
April 23rd, 2023

Chairman Stein, Vice-Chair Blasdel, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the House Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on behalf of House Bill 197 (HB 197), a bill to enable a community solar pilot program in Ohio. My name is Stephanie Thomas.

A community solar pilot program is straight-forward, smart policy for Ohio. Community solar allows more Ohioans to enjoy the cost-savings of clean solar energy on their bill every month. Community solar has been successful policy across the country. A pilot program ensures Ohio's community solar program will best meet the needs of Ohio residents and businesses. According to Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service, this bill will grow Ohio's economy by \$3.49 billion, bring in \$409.5 million in lifetime local tax revenue, and create over 27 thousand job years! This bill invests in the future of Ohio and Ohioans

I am also a member-owner of Cleveland Solar Cooperative, a cooperative business in Greater Cleveland. Cleveland Solar Cooperative is developing community-owned solar arrays utilizing current net-metering policy. HB 197 would make it easier for my cooperative to invest in new arrays and see the benefits of owning solar panels directly on our bills.

HB 197 is a common-sense win-win-win for all Ohioans. Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on behalf of HB 197.

Sincerely,

- Stephanie Thomas