



Senator George Lang
Senate Bill 247
Sponsor Testimony
Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
June 11th, 2024

Chairman Reineke, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Smith and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 247, which seeks to establish a community solar pilot program.

The core mission of Senate Bill 247 is to create a small-scale solar program to be a part of the solution to Ohio's energy generation and aging infrastructure needs. This bill will add a total of 1,500 MW of generation and will use private capital, rather than ratepayer dollars, to upgrade the grid.

Community Solar development is anticipated to spread across Ohio. More than 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.

Senate Bill 247 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.

Community solar increases energy choices for everyone and builds a more resilient and reliable electric grid by diversifying energy sources and decentralizing power generation. A distributed grid of local solar facilities mitigates the risks associated with centralized power generation, such as power outages due to extreme weather or equipment failures.

Community solar projects would create thousands of jobs in installation, maintenance and administration. In an analysis from Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service, community solar legislation could yield nearly \$3.5 billion in gross state

product and provide over \$400 million in local tax revenues over its lifetime.

By enacting the provisions in Senate Bill 247, we can ensure a more resilient grid, cheaper energy, and a decentralized infrastructure for Ohioans. These steps are critical to ensure Ohio is on a path to become the most business friendly state in the country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 247, and I would be happy to answer any questions.