



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

**Before
The Ohio Senate**

Energy and Public Utilities Committee

**Testimony on Senate Bill 275
(Regards Virtual Net Metering and Meter Aggregation)**

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On Behalf of the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

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Hello Chair Reineke, Vice-Chair McColley, Ranking Member Smith, and Committee members. I hope you and your colleagues are well. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation. And thank you to the Bill Sponsor, Senator Dolan, for this proposal to advance economic development and job creation in Ohio.

My name is Maureen Willis. I am the Ohio Consumers' Counsel, the Director of the state agency that represents 4.5 million residential utility consumers. I am testifying as an interested party.

OCC supports economic development and job creation in Ohio. This legislation will play an important part in advancing this common goal. We also recognize the critical task of providing adequate and affordable electricity to all Ohioans, including residential consumers, small commercial enterprises, large manufacturers (such as Intel and Honda), and the recently emerged data centers (such as Amazon and Google). In Ohio we rely on a competitive market for electricity where all forms of generation resources can compete freely and fairly without subsidies.

It is not economically feasible for residential utility consumers to participate in the virtual net metering market due to their small monthly electric demand and consumption. Ohio residential consumers do not cause or contribute to costs (if any) in the virtual net metering market. They should not be required to pay for any direct or indirect costs associated with the virtual net metering market. We understand that, as pointed out by Senator Dolan in his sponsor testimony, this bill *"is designed primarily for commercial development and use. Thus, the participating commercial customers will pay all distribution costs thereby preventing utility companies the need to 'cost shift' to other consumers."*

We appreciate Senator Dolan's intention to prevent cost shifts to other non-participating consumers, such as residential consumers. To fulfill that intent, OCC is proposing an amendment that will codify and ensure no cost shifting to residential consumers. Specifically, we recommend the following:

"Add to line 110 following "customer." "The contract or tariff shall include retail rate components and monthly charges that cover all direct and indirect net metering costs for virtual net metering."

Thank you again for your consideration of Senate Bill 275 and this opportunity to present testimony.