

Testimony by Judy Nelson on Senate Bill 247

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

December 3, 2024

Chairman Reineke, Vice-Chair McColley, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Senate Bill 247 (SB 247), a bill to establish a framework for the Community Solar Pilot Program (CSPP) and encourage community solar facility development in Ohio.

My name is Judy Nelson and I am a resident of Kent, Ohio. I am a member of the city's Sustainability Commission; however, for this testimony I am speaking only as a resident of Kent and not in any official capacity.

Kent is a wonderful community whose residents have long supported sustainability initiatives. My husband and I are in full agreement with the efforts the city and residents have made and were fortunate to be able to take advantage of a Portage County solar coop to install panels on our home in 2019; however, as 25.5% of our residents have incomes that fall below the poverty line, according to the most recent US Census, solar is just not feasible for many Kentites even with the federal tax credits currently available. The proposed community solar legislation would provide an opportunity for these residents and others whose circumstances prevent them from installing solar on their homes to participate in the transition to renewable energy. Additionally and importantly, these types of projects will help to support a more resilient electric grid here in Ohio.

As of Jan 2024, 24 states have enacted similar legislation. I strongly encourage a "yes" vote on SB247 so that it can move out of committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on behalf of Senate Bill 247. This bill represents a significant step forward in making renewable energy affordable, equitable, and accessible to all Ohioans while boosting economic and environmental outcomes. I am happy to answer any questions.

Judy Nelson

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