

Testimony by Lawrence R. Austing on Senate Bill 247

Unaffiliated

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

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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 Lawrence R. Austing, and I am writing as a citizen of Ohio.

I believe community solar facility development will be an economic boon to Ohio by creating jobs and making brownfields productive again. I believe it will help build infrastructure that will make electricity less costly to all Ohio consumers (i.e. when supply increases prices decrease) and its production more resilient and reliable by spreading out that production. This will make renewable energy available to those that cannot afford to install solar panels on their houses or cannot due to site restrictions including shade from trees. The latter will in turn encourage the retention of residential trees which help moderate neighborhood and household temperatures and are appealing aesthetically. The bill also has common sense safeguards to protect consumers and treat public utilities fairly.

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.