

# Testimony to the Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee

By: Jon Paul Morrow, M.Econ., M.PoliSci., Executive Director, Committee for a Better Ohio

## Re: Proponent Testimony for House Bill 308

Chairman Bill Reineke, Vice Chairman Rob McColley, Ranking Member Kent Smith, and esteemed members of the committee,

I address you today not merely as a proponent of House Bill 308, but as a defender of reason, a champion of innovation, and an advocate for the profound potential of human ingenuity. Nuclear energy, vilified by those ensnared in the fallacies of fear, emerges as a beacon of hope, a bastion of progress, and the green energy solution our state so desperately needs.

### The True Definition of "Green Energy"

The concept of green energy should not be reduced to simplistic labels or selective narratives. True greenness encompasses environmental sustainability, economic vitality, and societal advancement. It is energy that minimizes harm, maximizes benefits, and fortifies the foundation of prosperity for Ohioans. Nuclear energy epitomizes this ideal.

Critics decry nuclear energy, emphasizing uranium mining and radioactive waste, yet they ignore the colossal environmental devastation and resource dependencies inherent in so-called renewables. Wind turbines, Solar Panels, and Grid Battery Backup - demand the mining of rare earth metals on an unprecedented scale, often exploiting vulnerable populations. Their production, installation, and maintenance leave scars on the earth and on disadvantaged populations far greater than any uranium mine. Unlike renewables, nuclear reactors generate **baseload power** with unparalleled efficiency, ensuring stable energy costs for consumers and industries alike.

### Combating the False Narrative

Nuclear opponents argue that nuclear power is inherently carbon-intensive. When put into context this assertion collapses under scrutiny. Yes, uranium fuel cycles require energy. Yet, over the full lifecycle, nuclear power's carbon emissions remain among the lowest of all energy sources. It is a cornerstone in our battle against greenhouse gas emissions.

Consider the catastrophic environmental consequences should Ohio's nuclear plants be shuttered. Natural gas will fill the void, while much cleaner than coal, natural gas would still release millions of tons of carbon dioxide annually. This regression would render our state's climate goals unattainable. Nuclear power's opponents, knowingly or not, advocate for policies that will hasten the climate crisis they claim to oppose.

## **Embracing Innovation and Responsibility**

Nuclear opponents routinely dismiss advanced nuclear technologies as speculative. Let us not forget that every technological leap—whether splitting the atom or landing on the moon—once resided in the realm of speculation. Advanced reactors, capable of consuming existing nuclear waste and producing minimal byproducts, are not a utopian dream but an emerging reality. Ohio can lead in developing and deploying these technologies, creating jobs, spurring economic growth, and cementing our state as a hub of innovation.

The objection that nuclear energy is expensive is a relic of the past. New reactor designs are more efficient, safer, and can be very economically competitive. As the cost of fossil fuels fluctuates wildly and renewable subsidies distort markets, nuclear power stands as a stable, long-term investment in Ohio's energy future. It is true that a first-of-a-kind reactor will be very expensive just as a concept car is much more expensive to produce than the one that rolls off the assembly line.

## **For Ohioans and the Future**

Green energy must benefit the people it serves. Nuclear power shields Ohioans from volatile energy prices, offers high-paying jobs, and delivers reliable, carbon-free electricity. It aligns perfectly with the values of responsibility, prosperity, and progress that define our state.

In conclusion, House Bill 308 is not merely a legislative proposal; it is a declaration of Ohio's commitment to reason, resilience, and responsibility. To reject nuclear power as being green is to resign our state to higher emissions, higher energy costs, and stagnation. To pass HB308 into law is to embrace a future powered by human ingenuity and sustained by the limitless energy of the atom.

I urge this committee to act with courage and conviction. Pass HB 308 and let Ohio lead the way toward a cleaner, greener, and more prosperous future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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