



# Ohio Citizen Action

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**Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee  
Chairman Reineke, Vice Chair McColley, and Ranking Member Smith  
Proponent Testimony on Senate Bill 247  
Testimony of Rachael Belz  
CEO, Ohio Citizen Action**

December 3, 2024

Chairman Reineke, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, my name is Rachael Belz, and I'm the CEO of Ohio Citizen Action. Thank you for the opportunity to present our support for Senate Bill 247 (SB 247).

This testimony is presented on behalf of Ohio Citizen Action's 48,500 members and supporters and all Ohioans who stand to benefit from the passage of SB 247.

Senate Bill 247 would create Ohio's first Community Solar Pilot Program. Under the legislation, renters, condo owners, and most small to medium-sized businesses who cannot install rooftop solar panels would have the opportunity to benefit from clean, renewable solar energy. Individuals and businesses subscribe to a "share" in a local solar project. Those who join would receive a credit on their monthly utility bills, with the size of your share determining how much of a credit that will be received.

In addition to expanding the reach of renewable energy, the Ohio Community Solar Pilot Program will provide guaranteed savings to subscribing customers, typically within the 10-20% range. Programs such as these create real, tangible economic impacts for local communities by creating jobs at home. These benefits are being seen in other states, and we support bringing these benefits to Ohio.

Ohioans support home-grown energy and reliability. Under the pilot program, community solar project developers pay for system upgrades and grid improvements needed to make their programs work. This increases capacity and resiliency for Ohioans near the projects.

As a pilot program, Senate Bill 247 requires a review to assess the program's success and determine future programs, offering a safety net for the projects and Ohioans.

It's time for Ohio to take a step forward in promoting renewable, Ohio-produced energy at the community level. We have the workforce and the consumer support necessary to make the Ohio Community Solar Pilot Program a success. It does not require large parcels of land or the long-term cost of added transmission lines, but rather thrives on flexibility and lower costs.

Ohio Citizen Action supports Senate Bill 247, the Ohio Community Solar Pilot Program, and hopes there is a chance that this bill or its companion House Bill 197 will pass through the General Assembly before the end of this year. Thank you for this opportunity.