

Testimony by Ariel Miller on Sub HB 79

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
December 3, 2023

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 Sub HB 79 to create voluntary energy efficiency portfolio programs. My name is Ariel Miller, and I volunteer as Advocacy Co-Chair of Faith Communities Go Green, an interfaith group in Southwest Ohio. I am a Christian in the Episcopal faith community.

I strongly support this bipartisan bill to create utility-provided incentives to help Ohio ratepayers - particularly renters and senior citizens with limited income - to be able to afford energy efficiency retrofits. As many people have no doubt repeated to this committee, the cleanest electricity is electricity you don't use. This bill will enable ratepayers to save money on their monthly bills at a time when housing costs are spiraling beyond reach for thousands of Ohio households. It is one piece in the mosaic of solutions which the Ohio Senate can pass to close the appalling gap in the supply of affordable housing in Ohio.

In addition, by reducing demand, this bill will reduce stress on Ohio's electric grid, especially during the increasingly severe and prolonged heat waves which we are suffering in Ohio. Reducing the upfront costs so Ohioans can afford to make their homes more efficient will help keep prices lower for all ratepayers and reduce the risk of blackouts, which can be deadly for those without air conditioning.

Finally, by passing this bill and encouraging Gov. DeWine to sign it, you will reduce CO₂ and particulate emissions from fossil-fuel fired plants, improving air quality and helping to prevent asthma and cardiovascular disease. This bipartisan bill is a win-win for Ohioans' health and housing security and I respectfully and hopefully encourage you to pass the bill out of the committee and send it to the floor of the Senate for a vote before the end of the Lame Duck session.

Thank you for considering my request.