



Dec. 3, 2024

RE: HB79, An Act Permitting Electric Distribution Utilities to Establish Certain Portfolios

Contact: Christian Koch – Manager, Midwest Policy, ckoch@ceres.org

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

Thank you for considering this testimony in strong support of HB79, Energy Efficiency Programs.

We submit this testimony on behalf of Ceres, a sustainability advocacy organization working with some of the largest businesses and investors in Ohio and across the country to build a cleaner energy future and a more sustainable global economy.

Ceres organizes several influential business networks including the [*Business for Innovative Climate and Energy Policy Network*](#) (BICEP) – a coalition of over 80 major businesses, all committed to driving sustainability throughout the economy; and the [*Ceres Investor Network*](#), a coalition of over 200 members with collectively nearly \$60 trillion in assets under management. Many of the companies in these networks have substantial operations or business interests in Ohio such as AO Smith, Holcim, Johnson Controls, Trane Technologies, and Nestlé.

Ohio businesses know that efficiency is one of the most effective and common-sense ways to improve a company's bottom line. That's why Ceres is proud to have organized a [**business sign-on letter**](#) in support of HB79, which includes signatures from **thirteen major Ohio businesses and trade organizations.**

By doing more with less, Ohio can save money, increase profits, and create jobs. This is particularly important for the many businesses in Ohio that have large energy needs and are sensitive to fluctuations in electricity prices and grid reliability. Energy efficiency programs are a powerful tool for mitigating supply-side costs and reducing electricity bills for all customers. By promoting energy-saving technologies and practices, these programs help to avoid high generation costs, reduce capacity obligations, boost economic development, and enhance grid reliability. This means that even if a business or resident chooses not to participate in an energy efficiency program, they still benefit from lower overall costs due to reduced demand and lower wholesale power prices. It's a win-win for everyone in Ohio.

Looking ahead, the potential savings from adopting these efficiency programs are substantial. **If more consumers purchase high-efficiency products as part of these programs, Ohio residents would save an estimated \$126 million on their electric bills by 2030, with savings more than doubling to \$326 million**



by 2040.¹ These savings will not only lower household and business costs, but also create a more stable energy market for everyone.

Efficiency programs also represent a meaningful opportunity for job growth and economic development across our state. Recent studies by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy have found that **energy efficiency programs that encourage efficient appliance purchases could lead to an additional \$880 million in job investments here in Ohio.**²

While there are immense savings projected through the adoption of energy efficiency programs for Ohio residents and businesses, we believe the bill also includes crucial provisions that will further ensure protections for Ohio consumers — a monthly cost cap of \$1.50, and the opt-out provision. We believe that HB79 is a step in the right direction, as it strikes a balance between allowing utilities to offer valuable energy efficiency programs and giving customers the flexibility to opt-out if they choose. This approach ensures that customers can benefit from the cost savings and reliability improvements that these programs offer, while still providing choice and flexibility and reducing risk of frivolous spending.

On behalf of Ceres, I ask that you support HB79 and advance the bill to the Senate floor. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding business support for HB79 and the importance of energy efficiency for Ohio residents and businesses alike.

Sincerely,

Christian Koch
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¹ https://appliance-standards.org/sites/default/files/fedappl_oh.pdf

² <https://www.aceee.org/white-paper/ohio-potential>