

# **Testimony by Randall Ellingson on Senate Bill 247**

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*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 Randall (Randy) Ellingson, and I am the Technical and Education Coordinator with Glass City Community Solar, Inc. here in Toledo, Ohio.

I have been in the solar energy community for decades, and actually own a “residential home share” of a community solar project in Colorado. Ohio would do very well in joining the many other states with Community Solar policies and programs – this is good business, bringing clear economic and environmental benefits to the community. Furthermore, the economics are generally very good for community solar since the projects benefit from the economy of scale, allowing larger (and easily maintained) arrays to deliver energy benefits to numerous consumers.

This brings me to my key point – this serves the “energy justice” ideals as well, because it facilitates the production of solar energy to benefit the low- and middle-income (LMI) communities where residents typically can’t afford a full rooftop installation due to high costs. Organizations such as ours can then participate in larger projects which generate clean solar electricity and distribute these credits to LMI consumers. The net result: expanded clean energy access for Ohioans who seek this as an element of their lives.

I do also want to mention the importance of consumer protections; at least one “Community Solar” company in the US managed to go bankrupt (at least in part), negatively affecting the early adopters of this approach. Sufficient oversight will be needed to ensure accounting and related business practices protect consumers from that unfortunate and unnecessary pathway.

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.

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