

# Testimony by Mimi Plevin-Foust on Senate Bill 247

Board Member, Legislative Committee Chair, FaCT Ohio  
(Faith Communities Together for a Sustainable Future)

*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 chance 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 Mimi Plevin-Foust. I'm a Board Member and the Legislative Committee Chair for FaCT Ohio (Faith Communities Together for a Sustainable Future). I also serve on a subcommittee of the City of Shaker Heights' Sustainability Committee and co-lead the Greater Cleveland Dayenu Circle, a citywide group of Jewish climate advocates and allies representing seven synagogues and one parish across NE Ohio.

I'm testifying today as a person of faith representing organizations with thousands of members who all believe deeply in humans' responsibility to cherish and be good stewards of God's creation – our fragile and beautiful planet Earth, the only planet God has given us.

I'm also testifying as a parent who is deeply worried about the climate disaster we may leave for my 23-year-old daughter, my nieces and nephews, and all our children and grandchildren if we don't make smarter energy choices and do it fast.

For the past few years, Ohio has chosen to rely on polluting fossil fuels for almost all its energy needs despite over a year of climate change-induced statewide drought hurting our farmers, record-breaking heat and smoke-filled air from Canadian fires forcing us indoors, and climate-fueled weather disasters around the nation and the world. This is why Ohio has been ranked the fourth highest state in greenhouse gas emissions in the country, according to Ohio University's Center for Air Quality.

But by passing SB 247, this committee can help Ohio join the many states benefitting from lower-cost, renewable energy and change that depressing story: SB 247 is such a thoughtfully written set of timely, useful policies that it's like getting a whole Thanksgiving dinner from turkey to pumpkin pie in just one bill: SB 247

- Enhances Ohio's energy resiliency
- Promotes clean, renewable energy based on local needs;
- Creates local jobs in solar energy installation and maintenance;
- Turns idle or contaminated lands into assets that generate local tax revenue;
- Helps underserved communities in rural and urban areas;
- Protects consumers, and
- Saves Ohioans money on their energy needs.

There is no Planet B for Ohio's children. For the sake of all the children and young people we know and love, including the hard-working staffers and interns that work here, please pass SB 247 out of committee and do whatever you can to ensure it passes into law this year. Your children and constituents will thank you. I appreciate your time and consideration today.