

Testimony in Opposition to HB 308

by: David Brown/ Beavercreek, Greene Co, Ohio

**For: Chair Reineke, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Smith,
and members of the Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee**

I am a 70 year old life-long resident of the state of Ohio. An important reason I like living in Ohio is the high quality of life— with many forests and parks where I can enjoy nature and a clean environment. I am very concerned that these positive attributes of our state will be destroyed or severely degraded by HB 308 since it reclassifies nuclear energy and natural gas (methane) as “green energy”. This ridiculous and false claim could:

- 1) Divert funding from truly green renewable energy such as wind and solar to expensive, outdated, and dangerous nuclear power.
- 2) Make nuclear reactors eligible for taxpayer funding that is available for green energy, thus putting Ohioans on the hook to pay more for risky nuclear reactor projects. Nuclear electricity costs 3 to 5 times as much as wind and solar. Wind and solar are getting cheaper while nuclear is getting more expensive.
- 3) Cause a weakening of laws and regulations on nuclear reactors and waste.
- 4) Enable the manipulation of public funds into private, greedy, corporate hands.

Nuclear energy is NOT green when you consider the uranium mining, milling, enrichment; fuel fabrication; building of reactors; transportation of materials; and the resulting abundant high level radioactive waste (HLRW) This HLRW can go on emitting hazardous radiation for tens of thousands of years—basically forever!. There is no long-term storage facility to store this nuclear waste. It must just be stored in place by burying it. Then there is the huge added cost of decontamination once the reactors are shut down. And natural gas, which is methane, is a green house gas that’s about 80 times more powerful in warming the planet than CO2. Neither of these energy sources should be considered “green”!

The ill-effects of nuclear energy generation can be found at Piketon, in Pike County, which is home to the infamous Uranium Enrichment facility that has been the main supplier of enriched Uranium for nuclear power plants and weapons in the US. The plant was decommissioned and decontamination begun in 2011 after revelations went public detailing the

massive amounts of radioactive contamination the plant has unleashed over its 6 decades of operation. Former plant workers have testified as to the severity of the radioactive "plume" around the plant, which extends to at least 6 counties. Decontamination is still ongoing 13 years later!

Some alarming statistics: Pike County has a premature death rate among 25-55 year olds that is 109% higher than the national average and 66% higher than all of the neighboring Appalachian counties. And Uranium 236, which is directly attributable to the Piketon plant has been found in dust samples in homes and schools up to 15 miles away from the plant, and nearly 100 miles down stream. It's shameful! Piketon lies within the Appalachian foothills, about 24 miles north of the majestic Shawnee State Forest. I visited Shawnee State Park on November 22, 2024. What a beautiful park nestled within the Shawnee State Forest, an area often called the "Little Smokies". This amazing area of our state should be protected from nuclear contamination. I drove down to scenic Turkey Creek Lake beach, located near the Park lodge. Posted was a sign stating that it was unsafe to swim there. Why I'd like to know.

In addition to employing more renewable energy sources, other options to reduce our fossil fuel dependence that should be considered first are improving energy efficiency and upgrading our electrical grid. Energy efficiency, wind and solar, which are actually green, are cheap, quick, safe, popular, and proven. Ohio taxpayers should not be stuck with the bill for risky nuclear power plant projects. Vote NO on HB 308.