

# Proponent Testimony by Stephen Bagstad on House Bill 15

## House Energy Committee

March 19th, 2025

Chairman Holmes, Vice-Chair Klopfenstein, Ranking Member Glassburn, and members of the House Energy Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written proponent testimony on behalf of House Bill 15 (HB15), a bill that moves Ohio forward on energy generation and consumer choice. My name is Stephen Bagstad.

I am a retired engineer with over 30 years of industrial experience including extensive energy involvement, and for many years an advocate of efficiency and cost effectiveness. I have recently completed Electric Coach Certification with Rewiring America, and have had a solar system on my own roof for 8 years now.

HB 15 would help get community energy off to a good start for all Ohioans. There are many reasons we should support it, and here are a few I would like to emphasize.

First and perhaps foremost, electric bill savings for subscribers. In other states with community energy programs, savings on the order of 5% to 20% have resulted. Economic benefits can also extend to property owners. Almost half of U.S. states have policies in place supporting community energy.

Improved access to local solar energy for those in situations such as shared housing or lower income residents that may not have personal solar options.

Increased grid resilience by distributing generation and thus decreasing dependence on both a smaller number of large power plants and on an increasingly vulnerable and aging transmission system.

Finally, projects can be quite versatile - examples of installations include over parking lots, "brownfield" sites, or warehouse/big box roofs. Around my own community in Stow, I see open areas in parks and around buildings like churches that could be smaller system candidates as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on behalf of HB15.