



CUB OHIO ADVOCACY GROUP

Proponent Testimony by Tom Bullock on House Bill 158 Executive Director, CUB Ohio Advocacy Group House Energy Committee May 7, 2025

Chair Holmes, Vice-Chair Klopfenstein, Ranking Member Glassburn and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on House Bill 158 (HB 158), the Consumer Utility Billing Transparency Act, legislation to require the itemization of all riders, taxes, and other costs on monthly utility bills for electric, gas, and water utilities.

My name is Tom Bullock, and I am executive director of the CUB Ohio Advocacy Group. CUB Ohio Advocacy Group is a project of the Citizens Utility Board of Ohio. We represent customers in Ohio, both residential and small business. We advocate for state and local policies that deliver the benefits of new energy technologies to consumers in the form of less expensive, more sustainable and resilient energy with smart capabilities that give us more control over our monthly bills. We take an all-of-the-above approach to these issues, and our Board of Directors is bipartisan.

HB 158 would establish in law an important principle: that Ohio utility consumers should receive clear information to increase their understanding of the amounts they are being charged and what each is for. It requires a clear breakout and listing of the amount to be charged to the consumer in the categories of distribution, generation, transmission, supply, riders and chargers, and taxes and governmental fees.

This proposal would make an important improvement if it were to become law. It could also be strengthened further in at least two ways:

- By distinguishing between volumetric and fixed charges, currently opaque on some utility bills, making it more difficult for consumers to determine (for example) whether implementing energy efficiency might reduce their bills; and
- by requiring plain-English, complete definitions of riders to enable an average person to understand what they are.

As an example of less-than-clear terminology, the following appears on the monthly statements of an electric distribution utility. A small number of these terms are well defined (i.e. "customer charge") but most are not (e.g. "Cost Recovery Charge" is defined by more undefined terms):

*Rate: Residential Service CE-RSD
Customer Charge
Distribution Related Component
Cost Recovery Charges
Consumer Rate Credit
Net Meter Excess Credit*

Explanation of Terms

Bypassable Generation and Transmission Related Component - Charges for purchasing power and delivering it through the transmission system. These charges are avoided when switching to a Certified Retail Electric Service provider.

Cost Recovery Charges - Recovers previously incurred costs, including PUCO-approved Phase-In Recovery Charges CEI collects from all customers on behalf of CEI Funding, LLC which owns the right to impose and collect such charges.

Customer Charge - Monthly charge that offsets costs for billing, meter reading, equipment, and service line maintenance.

Distribution Related Component - Charge for moving electricity over distribution lines to a service location.

Economic Development Component - Charges related to economic development support.

Estimated Reading - On the months we do not read a meter, we calculate the bill based on past electrical usage.

KWH (Kilowatt Hour) - A unit of measure for electricity usage equal to 1,000 watts used for one hour.

KWH Out - Received - Kilowatt-hours of electricity that the customer-generator facility feeds back to the Company's system.

KWH Used - Delivered - Kilowatt-hours of electricity supplied by the Company's system to the customer-generator facility.

Late Payment Charge - A charge added to the bill on balances owed after the Due Date.

Price to Compare (PTC) - The utility's price per KWH for bypassable generation and transmission; can be compared with the price offered by another supplier.

QR (Quick Response) Code - A square, black-and-white image that can be read by a mobile device using a barcode scanner or camera to direct you to our website at http://www.firstenergycorp.com/log_in.html.

Residential Distribution Credit - A distribution credit for a qualifying rate applied to all usage over 500 KWH during the winter billing period.

Residential Non-Standard Credit - A generation credit for a qualifying rate applied to all usage over 500 KWH during the winter billing period.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. We would be happy to answer questions.