

House Public Utilities Committee
Proponent Testimony on HB 303
Testimony of Adam Forrer
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June 23, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of House Bill 303 (HB 303) on behalf of Audubon's more than 54,000 members in Ohio. I am Adam Forrer, Policy Director for Audubon Great Lakes, a regional office of the National Audubon Society.

Audubon Great Lakes supports HB 303 because it will help put Ohio on a path toward a cleaner, more resilient energy future—one that benefits both people and wildlife. By establishing a community energy program this legislation will expand access to local clean energy resources and support economic development throughout the state.

HB 303 makes critical progress by:

- Expanding access to clean energy for individuals, small businesses, and community organizations—especially those who have historically faced barriers to participating in the energy market.
- Lowering electricity bills and creating opportunities for Ohio families and businesses to save money.
- Stimulating economic growth by supporting new jobs and investment in Ohio's clean energy economy
- Increasing grid reliability and resilience by diversifying local energy supply and allowing communities to generate power closer to where it's used.

Ohio is home to over 400 bird species and critical wildlife habitats that are increasingly threatened by climate change. Audubon's science shows that two-thirds of North American bird species may face unlivable conditions across their current ranges if climate change is left unchecked. From the Appalachian foothills to the Lake Erie shoreline, our landscapes are vital for both biodiversity and the quality of life of Ohioans. The expansion of responsibly sited renewable energy—such as that supported through community energy programs—can help reduce emissions while also protecting the places birds and people need to thrive.

Audubon strongly supports renewable energy solutions that are developed in ways that avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts on birds and other wildlife.

We urge the committee to advance HB 303 and help Ohio lead the way in building a resilient and sustainable energy future. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

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