



BEFORE THE OHIO HOUSE ENERGY COMMITTEE
HOUSE BILL 303
TESTIMONY OF STEVE W. CHRISS ON BEHALF OF WALMART INC.
OCTOBER 1, 2025

Chairman Holmes, Vice Chairman Mathews, and members of the House Energy Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on House Bill 303, which would enable Ohio utility customers to access renewable energy and reduce their energy costs while attracting investment and jobs to the state.

My name is Steve W. Chriss, and I am Senior Director, Utility Partnerships, for Walmart Inc. ("Walmart"). My job responsibilities include utility service management, regulatory engagement, including dockets before the Public Utilities Commission, utility-related legislation, and working with utilities on strategic initiatives and program development.

Walmart has made a large investment in Ohio, with nearly 58,000 associates at 169 retail stores and seven distribution centers. Additionally, Walmart supports Ohio businesses. In our fiscal year ending 2025, we spent \$9.4 billion with Ohio-based suppliers, supporting over 95,000 supplier jobs in the state.

Walmart is also working to make clean energy accessible and affordable for our customers and members, and we have committed to unlock 2 GW of new community solar projects around the United States. As an example, we recently announced our investment in seven community solar projects in Illinois and New York, which will serve low-to-moderate income households, public schools, and religious institutions, among others.

House Bill 303 creates a community solar market to enable Walmart and others to invest in new generation resources in Ohio and bring the energy cost benefits to the state's residents, institutions, and businesses, and bring investment and jobs to the state's economy. The framework proposed in the bill is well-constructed and appropriately moderated to consider a broad array of interests throughout the community solar deployment process. By creating a stakeholder working group to assist in establishing the pilot program's rules and rollout, the framework invites utility and broad stakeholder engagement in the process to balance costs and benefits while enabling the successful deployment of community solar.

Walmart enthusiastically supports passage of House Bill 303, and I thank the Committee for its time and consideration today.

