



10/1/2025 Testimony of Scott Elias, Director of Policy and Market Development, CleanCapital

To the

House Energy Committee—Proponent Testimony for HB 303

Good afternoon Chairman Holmes, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Rader, and fellow members of the House Energy Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in strong support of HB 303, which will establish a Community Energy Program in Ohio that CleanCapital is ready to invest in.

Introduction

My name is Scott Elias, and I serve as Director of Policy and Market Development at CleanCapital. CleanCapital is a leading independent power producer focused on distributed energy resources. We develop, own, operate, and invest in distribution-connected energy assets across the U.S., providing energy to hospitals, schools, municipalities, utilities, and corporations.

HB 303 Is a Pro-Business, Pro-Energy Bill That Meets This Historic Energy Moment.

Electricity demand is rising in the United States for the first time in a generation. This evolving energy system should incorporate a mix of centralized and distributed resources, but with demand from AI and manufacturing surging, Ohio does not have the luxury of waiting for PJM transmission expansions, gas turbine supply chains to loosen, or new nuclear plants to be built. Those centralized resources alone will take years, if not decades.

HB 303 offers a market-oriented solution—bringing generation online quickly through private investment, not subsidies, mandates, or monopolies. Distribution-connected energy resources envisioned under this program can be built in as little as 18 months. That speed is critical to match rising demand with new supply.

As a reminder, HB 303 is the successor to HB 197 and HB 450 from the last two legislative sessions and was incorporated into a version of HB 15 that passed the Ohio House of Representatives by a vote of 90–3. By passing Community Energy again, Ohio can secure its energy future, reduce dependence on imported power, and deliver reliable, cost-effective energy solutions that give Ohioans the choice to lower their electric bills and unlock the power of community energy for consumers and the grid.

HB 303 Will Modernize Ohio’s Energy Infrastructure, Enhance Reliability, and Protect Ratepayers

A modern grid is not just bigger—it must be flexible, resilient, and consumer-focused. Community energy is essential in the age of data centers, rising energy costs, and severe weather. HB 303 will cut red tape, unlock the full potential of community energy to support the grid and benefit ratepayers, and foster innovative partnerships between the private sector and local communities.

This technology-neutral program will enable the development of energy generation that is connected directly to the distribution system, avoiding costly transmission upgrades and lengthy PJM approval processes. By generating power closer to load, community energy reduces line losses, strengthens reliability during peak demand, and saves ratepayers money.

Just as important, HB 303 protects ratepayers and non-participants of community energy. Developers and private investors bear the full risk of project success, and subscribers continue paying for poles and wires to maintain the grid. The bill's credit language—already passed by the House 90-3—ensures compensation reflects what an Ohio Manufacturers' Association energy consultant memo previously stated “appropriately values avoided generation and transmission costs and does not shift costs to other ratepayers.”

HB 303 Supports Rural Economies, Revitalizes Brownfields, and Generates Local Tax Revenue

Finally, Community energy provides steady lease income that helps family farms weather volatile markets and droughts. HB 303 also reserves capacity for landfills and brownfields, where CleanCapital has experience turning polluted land into productive “brightfields.”

According to Ohio University's Voinovich School, community energy development could add \$3.49 billion to Ohio's economy, support over 27,000 job years, and generate more than \$400 million in local tax revenue.

Importantly, HB 303 also includes local permitting authority and decommissioning requirements. Projects can only move forward with township approval and must include decommissioning plans—ensuring that projects are responsible, local tax-paying neighbors that deliver long-term value to their host communities.

Conclusion

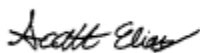
HB 303 is Ohio's opportunity to welcome new, homegrown generation that keeps electric costs stable, strengthens reliability, and attracts private investment.

The stakes could not be higher; not being able to meet our AI and data center energy needs will raise electricity prices further and undermine U.S. competitiveness. If we are serious about winning the AI race, we need policymakers at every level to put in place common sense, grid-strengthening policies that accelerate distributed, community energy.

Finally, as Rep. Ray said last week, allowing third-party community energy development will give Ohioans the freedom to save and the power to choose. Passing HB 303 and enabling community energy will help us meet skyrocketing demand for energy and keep energy prices down for Ohio's families and businesses.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We urge a favorable vote on HB 303.

Sincerely,



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