



Ohio Citizen Action

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**Ohio House Energy Committee
Chairman Holmes, Vice Chair Mathews, and Ranking Member Rader
Proponent Testimony on Substitute House Bill 303
Testimony of Rachael Belz
CEO, Ohio Citizen Action**

November 12, 2025

Chairman Holmes, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Rader, and Members of the House Energy Committee, my name is Rachael Belz, and I'm the CEO of Ohio Citizen Action. Thank you for the opportunity to present our support for Substitute House Bill 303 (HB 303).

This testimony is presented on behalf of Ohio Citizen Action's 48,500 members and supporters and all Ohioans who stand to benefit from the passage of HB 303.

House Bill 303 would create Ohio's first Community Energy Pilot Program. Under the legislation, renters, condo owners, and most small to medium-sized businesses who cannot install rooftop solar or other energy generation sources would have the opportunity to benefit from these programs. Individuals and businesses subscribe to a "share" in a local project. Those who join receive a credit on their monthly utility bills, with the size of your share determining how much of a credit that will be received.

Programs such as these create real, tangible economic impacts for local communities by creating jobs at home. These benefits are being seen in other states, and we support bringing these benefits to Ohio.

Ohioans support home-grown energy and reliability. Under the pilot program, community energy project developers pay for system upgrades and grid improvements needed to make their programs work. This increases capacity and resiliency for Ohioans near the projects.

Because this is a pilot program, the size scales up, and guardrails are provided. The 1,500 MW cap strikes a balance between meaningful market development and conservative risk management, with built-in requirements for in-state siting and customer size limits.

It's time for Ohio to take a step forward in promoting 'made in Ohio' energy at the community level. The uptick in data center development in Ohio will result in a spike in demand for electricity. This will in turn mean higher prices and more potential brownouts and blackouts for Ohioans. By embracing more homegrown energy, we can increase supply and reliability, keeping prices down and the lights on.

We have the workforce and the consumer support necessary to make the Ohio Community Energy Pilot Program a success. It does not require large parcels of land or the long-term cost of added transmission lines but rather thrives on flexibility and lower costs.

Ohio Citizen Action supports Substitute House Bill 303, and we are grateful for the collaborative process that moved us toward a stronger bill. We strongly support the Ohio Community Energy Pilot Program, and we urge your support as well. Thank you for this opportunity.