



February 25, 2026  
Before the House Energy Committee  
Opponent Testimony on Substitute House Bill 173

Chairman Holmes, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Rader and members of the House Energy committee, my name is Frank Strigari. I serve as Vice President of External Affairs for AEP Ohio. Thank you for allowing me to testify today in opposition to Substitute House Bill 173 (Sub. HB 173).

AEP Ohio appreciates this committee's continued consideration of Sub. HB 173, legislation that seeks to "regulate" the practice of submetering in the State of Ohio. At this point in time, although this committee is now on its 10<sup>th</sup> hearing for Sub. HB 173, the legislation is even more deficient in protecting submetered customers than the previous iteration.

Unfortunately, last week's amendments weaken Sub. HB 173 even further. Most notably, unlike the previous draft, submetering companies would no longer be required to submit a compliance plan to the Public Utilities Commission for any property or community – with more than 50 units – that would be submetered. Customers who are already submetered under current law lack many of the rights afforded to customers of Ohio's regulated utilities. Yet, last week's amendments carve out even more classes of customers at "smaller" properties who are left out from important compliance provisions.

Despite AEP Ohio's continued opposition to the practice of submetering, we have endeavored to offer good faith, constructive feedback to this committee by submitting amendments on November 12, 2025. Regrettably, none of those suggested amendments have been incorporated into the latest substitute bill. Those amendments include, among others, allowing the practice of submetering to continue at future "greenfield" developments, while grandfathering existing submetered locations.

AEP Ohio remains steadfast, however, in its opposition to any "conversions" of existing housing developments. Such conversions should be expressly prohibited, unless both the utility and the property owner jointly agree to convert the utility's existing customers to submetering. This safeguard would prevent the most egregious cases of submetering where current customers of AEP Ohio would suddenly find themselves without access to important payment programs, including PIPP, that they have come to rely on, and with no recourse other than to move.

I urge members of the committee to take note that not one customer who is submetered has offered testimony in support of this bill. There is a reason for that, and it is because the bill before you today continues to favor the submetering companies and those who profit from the practice, instead of everyday Ohioans. At a time when affordability is top of mind for all Ohioans, Sub. HB 173 would provide Ohioans with even less control over the affordability of their electricity bills. For that reason, and many others, I strongly urge this committee to reject this legislation.

I welcome any questions that this committee may have.