



**Christopher L. Wyche**  
Columbus City Councilmember, 1<sup>st</sup> District

City Hall  
90 W Broad St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
CLWyche@Columbus.gov

**Committees**  
Public Utility and Sustainability, Chair  
Community Recreation and Parks, VC

---

Good afternoon, Chair Holmes, Vice-Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Rader, and fellow members of the House Energy Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on substitute House Bill 173.

My name is Christopher Wyche and I have the pleasure of serving as the Chair of the Public Utilities and Sustainability Committee on Columbus City Council representing a growing population of over 900,000 Ohioans. I appreciate the sponsors' efforts to give concrete consumer protections to the individuals using Sub metered Utility services. However, in section 4933.56, division (A) states, "the PUCO may adopt rules requiring the biennial registration of some or all types of behind-the-meter utility service providers in the state". I would recommend changing may to shall, in order to ensure the PUCO acts swiftly to come up with registration rules and requirements. Residents of Ohio have been paying inflated utility prices for over a decade and cannot afford to wait for relief.

Affordable and reasonably priced utility services are essential for the safety, health and welfare of the residents of Columbus, and the State of Ohio. That is why in November of last year Columbus City Council passed a city ordinance that outlines industry best practices, billing transparency, and consumer protection measures for utility reselling companies operating in the City of Columbus. Since its passage, my office has heard from many other local governments and residents from across Ohio who want to see the same common-sense measures put into place for their communities; further highlighting that a piece mill approach to regulating such a robust industry will not suffice to protect consumers from often predatory practices.

I appreciate the work of the committee to get to this version of the bill and support the consumer protections currently contained in this substitute bill such as requiring sub-metered utility service providers to register with the PUCO, providing evidence of managerial, financial, and technical capabilities, and compliance with disconnection requirements under the law. However, I urge the committee to consider requiring the additional transparency measures currently outlined in Sec. 4933.59 as options for the commission, as well as removing any other permissive language from the legislation. Consumers deserve the same protections as non-sub metered customers and the ability to have the representation of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel when disputes arise.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these suggestions. I am happy to answer any questions from the committee.