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Chairman Jones, Ranking Member Rogers, and colleagues of the House Natural Resources Committee. Rep. Peterson and I are thankful for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 170 which establishes a framework for the state of Ohio to regulate carbon capture and storage projects.

Simply put, carbon capture and storage – CCS for short – is the process of capturing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from industrial sources, and safely storing this CO₂ deep underground into geologically formed voids and cavities.

Take, for example, a large power plant in eastern Ohio. This power plant as a byproduct of the essential energy it provides our state, emitting large amounts of CO₂. Instead of pumping this byproduct into the atmosphere, using CCS technology, the CO₂ is isolated and moved to an on-site well next to the power plant. There, this well moves the isolated CO₂ hundreds of feet below the ground, to naturally formed geological pore space for safe, permanent, and secure storage.

Carbon capture and storage projects utilize Underground Injection Control (UIC) Class VI injection wells to execute this process. Currently, these wells are federally regulated, and companies must work through the U.S. EPA to attain a permit.

There are two problems with this regulatory system which this bill will address. First, as you all know, working through the dense federal bureaucracy, is a taxing, and artificially long process. Companies looking to implement this technology have faced years long delays, curtailing potential investment into our state. Second, and most importantly, federal regulation and permitting is out of touch with the needs of our state and serve as a barrier to ensuring Ohioans perspectives influence this process.

While this bill deals with a complex subject, the goal is quite simple: give the state of Ohio - and Ohioans - more control over carbon sequestration projects. House Bill 170 establishes the framework necessary to allow our state to take over the permitting and regulation of these wells from the federal government. Using industry terms, this bill will allow Ohio to gain regulatory primacy of UIC Class VI injection wells.

Regulating carbon capture and storage ourselves means that the individuals who are responsible for regulatory compliance will be OHIOANS. They will have a vested interest in ensuring that safety regulations are followed, and resources can be on-site rapidly if there is a need. Creating a regulatory framework for carbon capture and storage will ensure that the process, from start to finish, is done by Ohioans, for Ohioans. We cannot rely on the bloated and inefficient federal government to look out for the interests of our state and its residents.

Make no mistake, carbon capture storage technology is here. This General Assembly must act to ensure Ohioans rights are protected, and their voices are heard.

Once Ohio gains regulatory primacy, we can ensure our state retains the benefits these projects will bring.

The deployment of CCS supports domestic energy security. While federal and international law and regulations require decarbonization, oil and gas are still expected to remain a significant part of the energy mix. By capturing emissions from the use of oil and gas, CCS supports both the achievement of climate goals and domestic energy security, helping ensure access to cleaner, more affordable energy. Because of the prevalence of porous shale rock in the Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio tri-state area, Ohio is an excellent candidate for Class VI Injection wells.

Several states have enacted similar legislation, and reaped the benefits this technology and investment can bring. States like North Dakota, Wyoming, Louisiana, and most recently, our neighboring West Virginia, all have received primacy, putting them in the driver's seat to attract new investment. If Ohio does not act, industry will look to other states, and Ohio will lose out on jobs and economic development.

Again, carbon capture storage technology is here. House Bill 170 will ensure Ohio rightfully takes on the responsibility of regulating this technology, while also seizing upon the opportunity it presents.

Before we move on to questions, we do want to note that we plan on having experts in this field testify before the committee at a later date. These experts will be well-suited to answer many of the more technical questions you all may have.

Given that, we greatly appreciate your time and attention today and would be happy to answer the committees' questions.