

Ohio House Natural Resources Committee

The Honorable Don Jones, Chairman

Proponent Testimony

House Bill 170

Dallas Gerber | Growth Energy

April 30, 2025

Chairman Jones, Vice Chair Robb Blasdel, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Natural Resources Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 170, important legislation that will allow Ohio to take advantage of its unique geography and power the next generation of energy production in the state. Growth Energy is the world's largest association of biofuel producers, representing 97 U.S. plants that each year produce more than 9.5 billion gallons of cleaner-burning, renewable fuel, including five of Ohio's seven biorefineries. We also represent groups such as the Ohio Corn and Wheat Growers Association, working with them and thousands of bioethanol supporters across the country to bring better and more affordable choices at the pump, diversify our energy portfolio, create more energy jobs, and sustain family farms.

As you have heard from others today, carbon capture and sequestration technology allow a wide variety of energy producers, including and especially bioethanol producers, to permanently store CO₂ deep in the ground. CO₂ is a byproduct of the bioethanol production process. CO₂ captured at a bioethanol plant is 99.9 percent pure. Currently, roughly 25% of the bioethanol industry captures their CO₂ for sale for use in industries like dry ice or beverage production and municipal water treatment. An average bioethanol plant that produces 60 million gallons can capture 150,000 tons of CO₂ annually.

Carbon capture and sequestration is a critical tool for the bioethanol industry, particularly as demand for low-carbon liquid fuels continues to rise. Sequestration of CO₂ will allow Ohio bioethanol producers with easy access to CCS to compete in a global energy economy that is placing an ever-higher premium on low-carbon fuels. Whether it is crop-based sustainable aviation fuel or lower-carbon gasoline with increased bioethanol blends in West Coast markets, Ohio bioethanol producers will be in a prime position to take advantage of this demand, thanks to CCS.

HB 170 will help Ohio determine its own future in terms of energy production, without having to rely on a lengthy and sometimes arbitrary process run by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA currently has 164 CO₂ injection well applications under review.

Many of these permit applications have experienced delay after delay, preventing bioethanol producers from moving forward on capital- and labor-intensive carbon sequestration projects.

This bill sets up the regulatory framework to eventually allow Ohio to gain primacy, eliminating the need for EPA approval and the lengthy delays that often come with it. Growth Energy's members, and the corn growers with whom we work, will benefit greatly from Ohio's efforts on Class VI primacy.

Thanks to Ohio's geology, many of Ohio's bioethanol plants have the ability to sequester carbon nearby their operations. This ability will help not only bioethanol producers. CCS will help create new markets for Ohio corn farmers. With USDA forecasts showing further decreases in farm incomes, these new markets and economic opportunities are particularly important for rural communities dependent on grain prices and biofuels production.

Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), the production of which relies on low-carbon feedstocks and the use of CCS, can add as much as \$2 in value per gallon of bioethanol. That is a nearly \$6 value add for each bushel of corn bioethanol producers purchase for SAF production. Countries and companies around the world are increasing their SAF usage, creating new economic opportunities for Ohio corn growers.

I want to thank Reps Robb-Blasdel and Peterson for introducing this legislation and working with stakeholders to ensure the economic benefits of CCUS projects have a positive impact on all Ohioans. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.