



**Aspire Energy SB 219 Proponent Testimony**  
**House Natural Resources Committee**  
**Wednesday, February 18, 2026**

Chair Robb Blasdel, Vice Chair Fischer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony for Senate Bill 219, on behalf of Aspire Energy of Ohio (Aspire Energy).

Aspire Energy, a subsidiary of Chesapeake Utilities Corporation, owns and operates natural gas gathering infrastructure, including over 2,300 miles of pipeline, throughout 40 counties in Ohio. Aspire Energy supplies natural gas to several local distribution companies (LDCs) and cooperatives, and the company owns and operates six compressor stations and three mechanical refrigeration units, instrumental in extracting natural gas liquids (NGLs) from natural gas produced by Ohio natural gas wells. Aspire Energy gathers gas from local Ohio production and delivers it to local Ohio markets, serving over 20,000 end users.

In some communities, declining local production cannot fully supply the growing local demand from LDCs and cooperatives, particularly in cold winter months. In order to serve these communities, gathering companies may sometimes move gas from non-gathered sources to local communities. In cases with significant changes in local supply and demand, a gathering company may at some point convert to a natural gas company. Ohio Revised Code Section 5727.02 does not provide a clear definition of when this change should occur, resulting in an unpredictable business environment.

One provision of Sub. S.B. 219 (Lines 2445-2451) clarifies that if the majority of the gas flowing through a company's pipelines is from gathered sources, the company is not considered a natural gas company. This change will enable companies such as Aspire Energy to both continue to serve local Ohio communities and to operate in a predictable business environment.

Senate Bill 219 will provide this much needed tax status clarification, and we urge the committee to favorably pass the bill.

Steve Baccino  
Director, State Affairs & Engagement  
Aspire Energy of Ohio, LLC