



To: Senator Brian Chavez, Chair, and Members of the Senate Energy Committee
From: SeMia Bray, Executive Director, Black Environmental Leaders Action Fund
Date: February 18, 2025
Re: BEL Action Fund Testimony re: SB 2

Chair Chavez, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Smith and members of the Senate Energy Committee, my name is SeMia Bray, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Black Environmental Leaders Action Fund (BEL Action Fund). BEL Action Fund works with Ohio communities and fosters partnerships across multiple sectors to bring research, practice, strategy, and analysis to the pressing energy, and health, concerns of our day.

The BEL Action Fund is happy to provide written testimony as proponents of Senate Bill 2. We are encouraged by the 136th General Assembly's recognition of Ohio's growing energy needs and its commitment to shaping a future where Ohio's energy needs are met. The actions taken through this bill are a crucial step in addressing Ohio's and PJMs energy shortfalls and supporting Ohio's energy landscape.

As we celebrate these necessary steps, we urge the committee to consider one critical addition to the bill: a strong workforce development component. While SB 2 is a significant step forward in addressing Ohio's energy needs, it is essential that as we continue to build and keep up with those needs, it is supported by a skilled, well-trained workforce. Without a dedicated focus on workforce development in this area, we risk falling short of our state's energy goals.

We strongly applaud the work Senator Reineke, and this committee has done in advocating for Ohio's energy needs. We ask that the committee contemplates incorporating provisions into SB 2 that promote workforce training, apprenticeship programs, and educational opportunities in energy fields for Ohio's residents. These initiatives will ensure that as the energy sector expands, it will be met with a workforce that is not only equipped with the necessary skills, but ready to take on these available jobs. By fostering such opportunities, we can create good-paying, sustainable jobs that lift Ohioans, and build an energy sector that is resilient, and ready to meet the challenges of the future. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SeMia Bray", with a long, sweeping flourish extending from the end.

SeMia Bray, Executive Director
BEL Action Fund