

Opposition Testimony for Senate Bill 2
March 12, 2025
Ohio Senate Energy Committee

Chair Chavez, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Smith and Members of the senate Energy Committee

While there are good proposals in the SB 2 draft, such as the repeal of the Legacy Generation Resource Rider and the Solar Generation Fund, there are portions of the bill tied to the Ohio Power Siting Board which are troublesome. One is the ability to shorten the process of application for an energy project from years to from 120 days or in some cases 45 days. These processes would apply directly to areas where a brownfield would be the location of an electric generating plant, transmission line, or gas pipeline, or if a utility project defined as being over 50 MW or more is proposed by land owned by the applicant (such as a large energy user-data center). No indication of where this land is located is mentioned in the bill, so the land could be located anywhere in the state. Given Ohio's recent acquisition of several large data centers, hundreds of thousands of citizens could be affected by these massive data centers and the power plants required to sustain them.

Citizens have the ability to comment on these large utility/data centers but with a short 45-day period, it is unlikely that most citizens in the state can become familiar with the externalities visited on their communities. These include environmental impacts as well as health issues. Ohio politicians have made it painfully obvious that fossil fuels are the energy of choice for the state. Consider bills like SB 52, which allows communities to ban wind and solar energy projects. In my region of the state, no one can ban fracking and in fact my property has been forced into a unit for fracking. So much for private property rights in Ohio. Consider the fact that the PUCO members asked for a health study of solar panels but when the Ohio Department of Natural Resources approved leases for fracking on state lands, no health or environmental impacts were considered.

I live in Harrison County. I know what these large data centers will do to my community: expand fracking. The promised economic development from fracking that was touted in 2011 when this destructive industry first came to SE Ohio has been proven to be a failed promise. Now, there are proposals to lower taxes for pipelines and other fossil fuel infrastructure. Right now, my school district, Conotton Valley is looking at a 1.5-million-dollar shortfall from a failed promise. The Rocket Center was to be paid for by a public utility property tax levied on the Rover Pipeline which crosses 15 miles of the district's property. However, the owners of the pipeline, Energy Transfer, appealed the taxes seeking to cut the taxable amount from \$3.5 billion to \$1.85 billion. Local citizens are now looking at a 4-mil permanent levy to cover the costs for the next 28 years.

Citizens in the area will carry the burden of increased gas production. They will see increased pipelines, more toxic radioactive brine wastes, more compressor stations, more well pads, more well pad accidents, more air and water emissions, and more water withdraws. Our communities are expected to become mineral colonies for these energy hog data centers.

Ohio can have cheap green energy in the form of solar and wind but the state only wants to expand fossil fuels. How ridiculous to claim we need energy and ban the most affordable and safe energy source in the state.

Respectfully,

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