



## Ohio Environmental Council [Action Fund]

**March 18, 2025**

**Proponent Testimony - Senate Bill 2  
Ohio Senate Energy Committee**

Chair Chavez, Vice-Chair Landis, Ranking Member Smith and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify as a Proponent on Senate Bill 2 (SB 2). My name is Nolan Rutschilling, and I serve as the Managing Director of Energy Policy for the [Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund \(OEC AF\)](#). The OEC Action Fund's mission is to protect the environment and health of all Ohio communities while ensuring a fair and affordable energy system.

While SB 2 is a comprehensive, sweeping piece of legislation, our testimony focuses on key areas that we support as well as opportunities for further improvement to help ensure that Ohio moves toward a reliable, affordable, and community-centered energy future. In previous testimony we expressed our support for the legislation's immediate repeal of the Ohio Valley Electric Corporation (OVEC) Coal subsidies and the repeal of Electric Security Plans (ESPs), as well as calling for energy efficiency and demand response programs to be included under rate cases.

**Support for the School Energy Program (School Energy Performance Contracting Loan Fund)**

We support the creation of the School Energy Program as an important tool to help Ohio's public schools reduce energy costs and free up resources for classrooms. By providing low-interest loans for solar and energy savings projects, this program allows schools to lower their utility bills, protect against rising energy prices, and reinvest savings into student learning and essential services.

Energy costs are one of the largest expenses for schools. This program offers a smart, long-term solution that delivers lasting financial benefits across the state.

**Recommendation to include Demand Response**

We recommend that demand response programs be added to the bill. Demand response allows customers to be compensated for reducing usage during peak times, which lowers system costs, avoids blackouts, and supports grid reliability. Demand response is a cost-effective solution available to industrial customers through "interruptibility" rates that would also benefit residential and small business customers, particularly as Ohio modernizes its grid.



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### **Recommendation for Appropriate Timelines in Siting Process**

While we support efforts to improve Ohio's generation and transmission buildout, we caution against shortening Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) timelines too drastically. Communities deserve the time and opportunity to review and weigh in on major energy projects that will affect them for decades to come.

We recommend lengthening the proposed siting review timelines, both for projects within and outside of Priority Investment Areas (PIAs). Longer timelines will allow for environmental reviews, meaningful public input, and better outcomes for all stakeholders, without causing unnecessary delays. A balanced approach to siting reform will ensure that we build the grid of the future while protecting community interests and environmental resources.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions or provide additional information.

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