



Senate Energy Committee
Interested Party Testimony for Substitute House Bill 15
Mryia Williams, Ohio Program Director
April 29th, 2025

Chairman Chavez, Vice-Chair Landis, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Energy Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Substitute House Bill 15. My name is Mryia Williams, and I serve as the Ohio Program Director for Solar United Neighbors. I am respectfully asking for the restoration of the Community Energy Pilot Program provisions originally contained in House Bill 15.

Sub HB 15 makes tremendous strides for Ohio's energy future—the repeal of the OVEC subsidies, strengthening consumer protections, and the establishment of smart, practical energy programs like the School Efficiency Loan Program are critical steps forward. I sincerely applaud the work that has gone into this legislation.

However, the removal of the Community Energy Pilot Program leaves a significant gap. Ohio is facing rapidly increasing energy demand from new manufacturing, data centers, and population growth. While large transmission projects are important, they are slow to permit, finance, and build. Community Energy is a complementary solution that can be implemented quickly on the **distribution side** of the grid, helping to fill the gap while utility-scale generation catches up.

Community Energy would allow Ohioans to invest in local generation—biomass, solar, hydro, and wind—strengthening grid reliability without the long delays or high costs of major transmission expansion. It

offers a pragmatic, bipartisan approach: 22 other states already have Community Energy programs, and they have proven to be successful tools in meeting energy needs without disruption.

Importantly, this was designed as a **pilot program**, with a defined megawatt cap, strong decommissioning requirements, and a mandatory four-year review period. If it isn't working as intended, the General Assembly retains the ability to adjust or sunset the program.

Restoring the Community Energy Pilot Program to Sub HB 15 would further strengthen an already impressive energy package and position Ohio to meet its growing energy needs with a full toolbox of solutions. We cannot afford to wait until energy shortages appear to act.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I respectfully ask for your support in restoring Community Energy to Sub HB 15.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mryia Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mryia" being more prominent than the last name "Williams".

Mryia Williams
Ohio Program Director
Solar United Neighbors