

Chair Chavez and members of the Senate Energy Committee:

I urge the Senators to vote no on SB 294. This misguided legislation would take Ohio in the wrong direction using the heavy hand of big government to obstruct property rights and free markets.

To claim that gas and nuclear are cleaner than solar and wind is laughable. Gas leaks from the natural gas fracking industry have been tied to measured increases of methane in the atmosphere. Methane is an 80 times more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. The gas that does not leak and is burned in power generating facilities produces carbon dioxide, the most prevalent greenhouse gas. And please don't insult our intelligence with climate denier propaganda assuring us that climate change is a hoax. Ohio is better than that. We can see the results of climate change with our own eyes.

The uranium mining necessary to fuel nuclear plants is responsible for significant radioactive soil, water and air contamination. The tailings and contaminated equipment from these mines must be entombed in expensive facilities designed to seal the radiation for thousands of years, hopefully. The nuclear industry still does not have a permanent solution for disposal of nuclear waste, which remains dangerously radioactive for thousands of years.

Solar and wind energy facilities, meanwhile, suck up photons and spin in the wind producing hundreds of gigawatts with virtually no emission. Sure, like any industry, there are environmental impacts associated with equipment manufacture, installation, and eventual disposal but nothing like the impacts of natural gas and nuclear facilities which produce waste and contamination at every step of their life cycle.

Why do the sponsors of this bill want to hamstring Ohio's economy? Ohio has two large solar panel manufacturing facilities. First Solar employs over 1000 employees in Perrysburg, including many high paying technical and engineering positions. In spite of the huge hurdles already placed on solar and wind at the Federal, and I am sorry to say State level, these companies have thrived and grown, while other manufacturing sectors have shrunk. Thanks to AI, Ohio is facing serious electrical capacity challenges. We need to be encouraging new solar and wind projects, which can be brought online and generating electricity quickly, unlike nuclear and natural gas.

This legislation runs so contrary to common sense and what is right for Ohio that voters can only assume that the big electrical utilities once again have the ear of the legislature and the legislature is tone deaf to its constituents.

