

Testimony by Mimi Plevin-Foust on Senate Bill 294

Board Member, Legislative Committee Chair, FaCT Ohio
(Faith Communities Together for a Sustainable Future)

*Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
February 10, 2026*

Chairman Chavez, Vice-Chair Landis, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the chance to submit opponent testimony on Senate Bill 294, a bill to declare the state's energy siting policy.

I'm Mimi Plevin-Foust--a Board Member and the Legislative Committee Chair for FaCT Ohio (Faith Communities Together for a Sustainable Future). I also co-lead the Greater Cleveland Dayenu Circle, a citywide group of Jewish climate advocates and allies representing seven synagogues and one parish across NE Ohio.

I'm testifying today as a person of faith representing organizations with thousands of members who all believe deeply in humans' responsibility to be good stewards of God's creation – Earth – the only planet able to sustain life for light years around us.

I'm also testifying as a parent who is deeply worried about the polluted air and water and climate chaos we will leave for my 24-year-old daughter, my nieces and nephews, and all our children and grandchildren if we don't make smarter energy choices and do it *now*.

Ohio's leaders have chosen to rely on polluting fossil fuels for almost all our state's energy needs despite over a year of climate change-induced statewide drought hurting our farmers, record-breaking heat, and climate-fueled weather disasters around the nation and the world. That's why Ohio has been ranked the fourth highest state in greenhouse gas emissions in the country, according to Ohio University's Center for Air Quality. (In fact, this year's freezing winter is also the result of global heating which has melted so much of the polar ice cap, it can no longer hold the Arctic air above it.)

Many of the solar panels, wind turbines, and storage batteries that SB 294 calls unreliable are manufactured right here in Ohio, like First Solar with three plants in Perrysburg and Waltbridge, that use 100% domestic content in their products (<https://www.firstsolar.com/Technology/Manufacturing>), Advanced Power (<https://www.advanced-power.com/home/projects>), and Geronimo Power with projects creating jobs, energy, and tax revenue throughout our state (<https://geronimopower.com/press-release/geronimo-power-expands-ohio-portfolio-with-two-additional-solar-projects/#>).

Through passing SB 294, this committee will further prioritize increased use of highly polluting methane gas as an energy source and nuclear energy which requires uranium mining and thousands of years of storage for spent waste. SB 294 will make it even harder to fill Ohio's skyrocketing energy needs with clean, cheap, *locally created* solar, wind, and geothermal energy. These energy sources are just as dependable as any others when paired with battery storage which is also produced *in Ohio* and getting cheaper by the day.

At a time when new data centers around Ohio are vacuuming up available energy and raising consumers' energy costs, why would this committee pass a bill that guarantees:

- Greater energy scarcity;
- Higher energy bills for Ohioans;
- Fewer high-paying energy jobs; and
- Greater pollution from fracking, transporting and burning methane gas that harms our children's health, pollutes our air and water, and heats the planet 20 times as quickly as carbon?

Why would this committee want to drag Ohio backwards, leaving us even farther behind neighboring states that are enjoying the cleaner air and lower costs of the new energy economy?

There is no Planet B for Ohio's children. For the sake of all the children and young people we know and love, including the hard-working staffers and interns that work for you, for cleaner air and water, more jobs and lower energy bills for struggling families, please do not pass the backwards-looking SB 294 out of committee. Your children and constituents will thank you.