

**Ohio Senate Public Utilities Committee**

Proponent Testimony of

**NRG Energy**

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**Senate Bill 151**

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Chairman Wilkin, Vice-Chair Reineke, Ranking Member DeMora and members of the Senate Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to the merits of Senate Bill 151, which will allow consumers to voluntarily purchase natural gas and carbon-offsets together to ensure natural gas remains a vibrant fuel for reliability while simultaneously meeting corporate or client-based sustainability goals.

My name is Melville Nickerson and I serve as the Director of Government Affairs - Central Region for NRG Energy Inc.

NRG is a publicly traded, fortune 500 company, we generate electricity for sale on the wholesale market in PJM and other regional transmission operators and we sell natural gas and electricity to industrial commercial and residential customers, saving our customers money and offering innovative services to meet their needs. Ohio is our largest Midwest market where we serve more than half a million customers and employ over forty individuals.

In addition, NRG announced recently the acquisition of LS Power which will add 13 Gigawatt of natural gas generation to our portfolio including one gas plant in Ohio.

Under SB151, natural gas consumers, specifically commercial and industrial customers, would have the option to offset their natural gas consumption with approved carbon offsets. Alternative natural gas suppliers would have the option to voluntarily offer natural gas along with carbon offsets to their customers. The retail gas supplier may recover from the natural gas consumer the costs of the carbon offsets secured through the program as well as a reasonable administrative fee. The program is completely voluntary, and it does not shift costs to anyone but the company who chooses the program.

Let me provide you an example of the type of company that might want to purchase this product. Let's say you are a small Ohio manufacturer who has made a decision to reduce your carbon footprint, or you have a national or international customer that has voluntary or required sustainability goals, having a pathway to meet your goals is critical. However, as we see in many communities across Ohio, your factory is located in an industrial park and

you don't control your building, or the land. This program would allow you to buy this product as an option. And yes, representatives of our company have talked to Ohio companies that have this problem.

We met with stakeholders and legislative staff last year about Senate Bill 174, the previously introduced version of similar legislation. We all agreed to several changes, and I do not know who would be in opposition to this new version of the bill.

I want to thank you Chairman Wilkin for introducing this important legislation, and for their leadership on this issue. I hope this Committee will look favorably on passing this bill.

I would be happy to try an answer any questions the Committee has at this time.