

Testimony of MATTHEW WORSHAM
STUDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON
Opposition Testimony for Ohio Senate Bill 320

11/28/16

Chairman Balderson, Vice Chairwoman Jones, Ranking Member Gentile, and Members of the Ohio Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am here to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 320.

I would first like to clarify that my statement is my own, and does not represent the opinion of the University of Dayton, though my beliefs are influenced by my Catholic, Marianist education at that institution.

I would like to address my testimony today to the entire committee, to the public, and especially to my senator, the Honorable Senator Shannon Jones, who is co-sponsoring the bill in question. Senator, my family is not native to Ohio. It was manufacturing that brought us to the state, and it was the innovative, hard-working attitude of your district that encouraged us to stay. I am studying renewable and clean energy at the University of Dayton because I want to help to build Ohio's advanced energy economy. The state has made great progress supporting the future of manufacturing and the future of our energy system through our renewable portfolio standards. That offers exciting prospects for engineers like me, who will likely end up in manufacturing, or in engineering services that will support energy projects for Ohio manufacturers. But this bill calls Ohio's support for engineers like me into question.

I understand that you and your Senate colleagues would like to protect Ohio jobs. However, I'd ask you to tell me how this bill supports my job, or my career prospects as an energy engineer. Since the original RPS freeze, the state of Ohio has made it clear that they do not take advanced energy seriously. Even the energy mandates study committee, which was tasked by the legislature with performing a cost benefit analysis of the standards, neglected to do its job, effectively ignoring the "benefits" of the RPS, and turning the study into a blatantly political attack on the Clean Power Plan. Governor Kasich himself called the freeze unacceptable. I support his call to reinstate the standards. Senate Bill 320 goes further down the wrong path, counting clean coal projects as renewable energy, something that is attractive in theory, but in practice has led to projects like the plant in Kemper County, Mississippi, which is weighed down by cost overruns and allegations of fraud. How do you propose expensive projects like clean coal will protect ratepayers, but renewable energy and energy efficiency won't? Further, how will a freeze on renewable energy mandates protect society at large, when a majority of economists agree that climate change is a net harm to society, and almost half agree it is already having an effect on our economy?

Senator Jones, I ask you and your colleagues to support engineers and ratepayers like me, and oppose SB 320 and the freeze on our renewable portfolio standards. The RPS has created jobs in Ohio, jobs that I hope to hold someday. If they disappear, I will have to go elsewhere.

I appreciate your time and consideration today. I welcome any questions the committee may have.

Sincerely,

Matthew Worsham