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**STATEMENT OF MIKE COPE TO THE  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 192  
March 24, 2021**

Chairman Stephens, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I am Mike Cope, President of the Ohio Coal Association which advocates publicly and legislatively on behalf of the Ohio coal industry. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement in support of H.B. No. 192 because the bill would help to maintain an all-the-above energy strategy by prohibiting local governments from needlessly restricting the use of fossil fuels.

Fossil fuels, especially coal, are essential to an all-the-above energy strategy. Ohio depends on coal for approximately 40 percent of its electricity. Besides producing affordable electricity, coal-fired power plants provide many attributes that are necessary for electricity reliability and resilience. These attributes include dispatchability, essential reliability services, and fuel assurance. The coal fleet also serves as an insurance policy by increasing its output when other electricity sources are not available (renewables and natural gas) or are too expensive (natural gas).

The extreme weather emergencies that 22 states experienced over the past several months help demonstrate why coal is important to maintaining reliable, resilient, and affordable supplies of electricity. The two states with the least amount of coal-fired generation experienced the most severe problems.

California, which has no coal-fired power plants and is heavily reliant on solar power, was forced to impose rolling blackouts last August that left 800,000 people without power. In addition to having unreliable electricity supplies, California also has the fifth highest electricity prices in the U.S. Californians pay 76 percent more for electricity than Ohio ratepayers.

Texas has retired one-third of its coal-fired power plants. The winter storm last month left 4 million people in the dark and at least 80 Texans dead. In addition, electricity prices were more than 20 times higher than they were before the winter storm, and natural gas prices rose nine times higher.

Ohio does not want to become California or Texas with unreliable and unaffordable supplies of electricity.

Other regions hit by the winter storm that have substantial coal-fired generation were forced to adopt far less drastic measures. These regions were able to call on coal to provide almost half their electricity during the height of the winter storm because other electricity sources could not perform as well as coal.

Resilience has become increasingly important because of extreme weather and other threats to the electricity grid, such as physical and cyber security threats. No other source of electricity is more resilient than coal, which is why coal performed so well during the winter storm five weeks ago.

The best strategy for Ohio consumers is to take advantage of the state's abundant, secure, and affordable coal resources. The worst strategy is one that limits the use of coal. H.R. 192 would prevent needlessly limiting the use of coal.

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