



## CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD OF OHIO

### Opponent Testimony of Tom Bullock on House Bill 118 Executive Director, Citizens Utility Board of Ohio House Public Utilities Committee March 23, 2021

Chair Hoops, Vice-Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the House Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 118, legislation to single out clean energy projects from all other forms of energy and all other types of development to impose township level regulations and subject them projects to local referenda. My name is Tom Bullock, and I am executive director of the Citizens Utility Board of Ohio (CUB Ohio).

CUB Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan consumer watchdog with members across the state that advocates for residential and small business utility customers. Our mission is to educate consumers to reduce their utility bills as well as to work for transparency and for energy that is affordable, reliable, and clean.

CUB Ohio educates consumers on how to save energy, keep their bills low, and get a fair deal from utilities. We also conduct public education about policies that support utility customers and improve their cost and quality of service. These include cost-saving strategies such improving efficiency, lowering peak demand, and shifting usage to off-peak hours, which lowers costs for everyone.

We also want clean energy that is *affordable* so that, as state government works to improve air quality and reduce the climate impacts of energy generation, it does so in a manner that is within the means of Ohio families and small businesses.

The fast-dropping prices of wind and solar, which today rank among the lowest-cost forms of energy, have helped greatly in this regard. This has prompted Ohio companies across sectors to increasingly choose fixed-cost renewables.

A major concern with this legislation is that it will have an anti-consumer impact: by artificially restricting supply, the bill drives up electricity costs. The legislation targets certain resources at the expense of a prudent, diversified portfolio.

A 2013 report commissioned by PJM found that adding up to 30 percent of renewables to the PJM mix would lower costs for fuel, operations, and maintenance, resulting in lower prices. The study shows that renewable energy is needed in PJM to lower costs for consumers while reducing emissions and protecting public health.

Energy brokers in Ohio likewise agree that a healthy combination of renewables and baseload power can help to provide an affordable and resilient power mix.

Clean power is in great demand and, as the attached slide shows, that demand is forecasted to grow and outstrip current supply. The slide provides a snapshot of U.S. corporate renewable commitments, with the left-half showing the shortfall between supply available now and new development needed to meet renewable energy demand. This is a great reason to allow Ohio to continue adding to its renewable energy mix and keep that prices affordable.

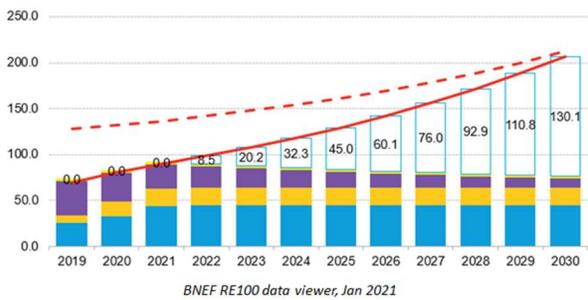
CUB Ohio believes our state should not subsidize big energy companies and pass on costs to consumers without a clear benefit. By the same token, we believe the State of Ohio should not adopt laws and rules that result in spikes in energy prices either.

H.B. 118 creates big problems in this regard and would put Ohio on a path to escalating costs for energy.

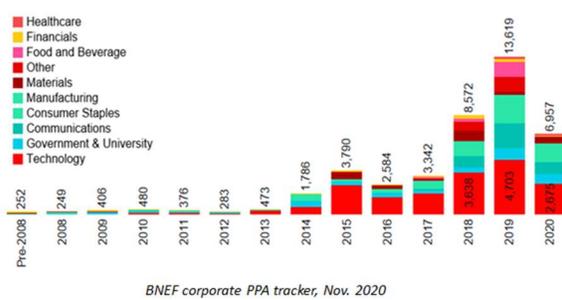
Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

## US corporate commitments to renewables remain aggressive and sector-diverse

US RE100 member energy procurement shortfall (TWh)



US PPA capacity by signing year by sector (MWh)



A June 2020 survey by *The Climate Group* found that **97%** of business professionals say their sustainability strategy remains unchanged through COVID-19, while **80%** say their company has been able to maintain current climate actions.