



October 27, 2021  
House Public Utilities Committee  
Interested Party Testimony on HB 389

Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the House Public Utilities Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today.

My name is Shauni Nix, Founder and Executive Director of the Ohio Energy Project (OEP). I am testifying on behalf of the thousands of teachers and students who have been impacted by OEP over the past 30+ years across Ohio. I started my career with OEP as a classroom teacher with my students. I feel the same passion for our children's education today as I did in 1989 in the classroom with my students.

I am writing to share how OEP's programs have made a significant impact on energy literacy, efficiency and conservation in Ohio. OEP's programs have inspired leadership and energy innovation in students, teachers, and communities for over 30 years. We have a long history of partnering with the State of Ohio--beginning in 1995, when OEP was included in Ohio's Energy Strategies Task Force Report and presented by Governor Voinovich as the recommended source for energy education in Ohio.

In 2008, SB 221 was passed with the intent of increasing the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy in Ohio homes and businesses. In response, OEP developed e3 Smart --an energy efficiency education program for students in grades 3-12--and initiated two pilot programs with the Ohio Environmental Education Fund and the Appalachia Rural Commission. The two pilot programs were very successful and OEP was recognized in 2008 as the Ohio Environmental Project of the Year by Ohio EPA. In 2009, armed with the results of both pilots, we approached AEP Ohio and received our first utility funding for e3 Smart, followed by AES Energy, CenterPoint Energy, Columbia Gas of Ohio, and Ohio's Electric Cooperatives. The outstanding financial and programmatic support of all five partners was instrumental in the success of e3 Smart, impacting teachers, students, and families across the state. The substantial educational impact we have achieved for our students would NOT have been possible without the provisions of SB 221 that encouraged electric utility energy efficiency programs.

### **e3 Program Impact for Ohio Teachers, Students and Families over the past decade**

OEP has developed and delivered the e3 Smart Program, supporting over 7,000 schools, teachers and classrooms with award winning curriculum that is correlated to Ohio's learning standards.

- **What do e3 Smart schools receive?**

- Each teacher receives a Teacher Guide -- this curriculum provides teachers with all the background information, lessons, labs and activities to bring energy to life in the classroom. Everything in the curriculum is correlated to Ohio's Learning Standards.
- First-time Classroom Teaching Kit. The investment for new teachers is \$500.00 in equipment to teach the lighting lab, insulation, heating and cooling lab, water heating and the appliance testing lab. Each lab has a take home component where students teach their families and install the items from their HOME energy efficiency kit that pertains to each of lessons in their homes. This "school to home" approach has been extremely successful as students become leaders in their homes and communities.
- After year one, alumni teachers receive an additional \$100.00 in equipment to replenish items in their teaching kit or add additional items to enhance their lessons.
- Each student receives a Student & Family guide to learn at home with the Energy Efficiency Kit they install with their families. This guide allows students to do additional research on their home's energy

use that will demonstrate how their efforts to save energy can make a difference. Each family is asked to submit a home installation survey.

- **e 3 Program Statistics**

- Over 300,000 students and their families received efficiency kits with potential savings of 522 kwh per kit, with savings over multiple years
- Over 50% of Ohio's school districts have participated in the e3 Smart Program
- Fifty eight percent of teachers participating are in schools with 50-100% of their student population receiving free/reduced lunch

In closing, energy literacy is critically important as it helps all of us understand the nature and role of energy in our daily lives, our communities, and the world. OEP's mission of leadership and energy innovation in Ohio's teachers, students, and communities will be enhanced with the passage of HB 389.

Thank you for your time today.