

Ohio Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee

Dear Members of the Committee:

As a citizen and a consumer, I am strongly opposed to SB 52, which would effectively put a moratorium on renewable energy projects in Ohio. My understanding of this bill is that it introduces a new layer of government regulation that is applied only to renewable energy projects and not to other power generation sources. It would also be applied retroactively to projects in which companies have already invested millions of dollars. Thus, it would not only create a discriminatory barrier to carbon-neutral energy production, but it would also hurt investors and business opportunities in our state, putting Ohio further behind in the competition for jobs and profits in a clean energy economy.

For many years now, we have been witnessing the disastrous effects of greenhouse gases on our climate, which is warming at an alarming rate. This trend is unsustainable, and the financial community is well aware of that. Many companies are already investing in renewable technologies, and the cost of production is declining rapidly. Research and development into how to increase efficiency and storage open up economic opportunities for Ohioans if our state is willing to make the investment. We will lose those jobs to other states if SB 52 were to pass. It would effectively freeze further investment in an increasingly competitive industry.

As consumers, we are also hurt by unnecessary regulation that raises the cost of renewable energy. By putting these projects at a disadvantage, the legislation would deprive Ohio electric users of the benefits of competitive pricing. HB 6 has already forced consumers to pay for a bailout of nuclear power and coal-fired plants while executives at First Energy and its subsidiaries took enormous profits. I'm sure I am not the only ratepayer who feels cheated by this corrupt deal. It is hard to believe that the Committee would consider a bill that would force renewable energy producers out of the Ohio market, making a low-cost, efficient and carbon-free alternative more expensive.

In short, for the sake of Ohio's economic future as well as its air and water quality, I urge the committee not to allow this bill to go any further. It's time for our state to recognize the opportunities and benefits of renewable energy and to begin investing in a clean, sustainable future.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Rushton

Strongsville