

May 11, 2021

To: Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
From: Patricia A. Marida, Columbus, Ohio resident

Testimony in support of Ohio SB 117: Repeal legacy generation resource provisions of H.B. 6

Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the committee,

It is hard to understand how the legislature is still willing to put ratepayer money, so desperately needed by Ohioans during the Covid crisis, into subsidizing FirstEnergy, a bankrupt corporation charged with egregious RICO violations. New violations continue to be brought forward and we may not have seen the last of them.

With the subsequent Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Minimum Offer Price Ruling, which requires utilities to charge more for their electricity if they receive state subsidies, **FirstEnergy no longer wanted the \$1.2 billion Ohio bailout** – because that would have made them uncompetitive with other utilities. The legislature obliged FirstEnergy by rescinding the nuclear subsidy - but keeping the coal subsidy and the rescinding of Ohio's renewable energy and energy efficiency standards. Which standards, if FirstEnergy had come into the 21st Century, would have helped them produce electricity more efficiently and in a sustainable mode. Instead, they continue to cling to their outmoded, dangerous and **far more expensive nuclear and coal** generation.

Two years ago, FirstEnergy's threatened (some did not consider it a threat) that they would have to close Davis-Besse and Perry if they did not get a state subsidy. Now, with the FERC ruling, they seem to not need a bailout and plan to keep the plants open. The obvious conclusion is that **FirstEnergy was duplicitous about needing a nuclear subsidy** and it is surprising that the Ohio legislature was not more suspicious of this false and misleading claim.

FirstEnergy did not gain much financially from the coal bailout. But the coal bailout served the purpose of **keeping other utilities with financial interests in the Ohio Valley Electric Cooperative from opposing a FirstEnergy nuclear bailout.**

Burning coal puts mercury and other heavy metals plus dozens of other toxins in the air and water, causes untold numbers of asthma cases and violates environmental justice principles. On top of that, coal burning endangers life by producing the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide that is destabilizing the Earth's climate system.

CONCLUSION: Committee members should vote in favor of SB 117 because a coal bailout is unfair and unjust, and because renewables are cheaper and cleaner.

Thank you to the committee members for reading this testimony.