



Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
HB 201 - Proponent Testimony
Sarah Spence, Executive Director
June 15, 2021

Chairman McColley , Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee: thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony for HB 201. My name is Sarah Spence, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Ohio Conservative Energy Forum (OHCEF).

OHCEF was founded in 2016 to provide a forum for conservatives to discuss a diverse, all of-the above energy portfolio – one that includes not only existing sources of traditional energy generation, but one that also seeks to expand the development of clean and renewable energy sources. OHCEF believes that clean energy and energy made clean through technology can strengthen both our economy and our national security while providing unmatched opportunities for innovation and job creation.

House Bill 201 provides safeguards that would allow every Ohioan and commercial business the right to obtain natural gas services by preventing political subdivisions from passing any ordinance, resolution, or building code to limit or ban the use of natural gas. Existing Ohio law allows Ohioans the option to shop for their preferred energy supplier. It also allows cities to create municipal aggregation programs that can contract for mixes of energy sources that can reduce consumer electric bills. Even cities that have these programs for their residents are required to offer the ability to opt-out of the aggregation program so their residents can choose their own energy supplier, if they wish.

OHCEF supports natural gas development in our state, and we also support municipal aggregation programs. In order to avoid any unintended consequences of HB 201 becoming law, we worked with Rep. Stephenson, Rep. Stewart and Sen. Lange to add an amendment into the bill that clarified that HB 201 language would not apply to municipal aggregation so local governments would still have the ability to create municipal aggregation programs with energy supply mixes that best fit their community needs. We believe that with the clarifying amendment, HB 201 will protect Ohio residents ability to choose the energy supply source that best meets their needs and their budgets.

Thank you again for allowing me to present testimony in support of HB 201. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.