



# Ohio Environmental Council [Action Fund]

**Opponent Testimony - SCR 21 (Balderson)  
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Trish Demeter, VP of Energy Policy  
December 12, 2018**

Thank you Chairman Landis, Vice Chair Hagan, Ranking Member O'Brien and Members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee for accepting testimony on Senate Concurrent Resolution 21. I am Trish Demeter, Vice President of Energy Policy for the Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund.

The OEC Action Fund fully and wholeheartedly supports the goal of creating permanent jobs and increasing local tax revenue for Appalachian communities. We also recognize that the concept of an Appalachian petrochemical storage hub comes with promises of millions in new tax revenue and permanent jobs for an underserved, and economically depressed region. However, the Appalachian region of Ohio has borne a disproportionate burden of negative health and environmental impacts caused by generations of fossil fuel extraction in the region, and therefore we do not support the concept of the storage hub. Petrochemical development at this scale could come with immense, and additional environmental and public health impacts, and further enable oil and gas extraction, storage, and transmission in the vicinity of valuable ecological locations like the Wayne National Forest.

Our opposition to this resolution comes from a place of concern that the full-scale impact of the creation of such a hub has not been fully weighed by state policymakers or state regulators, and that unquestioned support expressed in this resolution for the storage hub could result in compounding the burden of negative environmental and health impacts on Appalachian Ohioans.

If this resolution is to be enacted, and if the various storage hub facilities begin and/or complete their state permitting review, we urge the Ohio General Assembly to consider new state policy that would:

- **Prevent any oil and gas development related to the storage hub** from occurring in the Wayne National Forest and other public lands in the region;
- **Establish a transition plan, complete with a funding mechanism (referred to often as a “just transition fund”)** that ensures Appalachian communities can simultaneously build a local economy rooted in sustainable energy sources, and are supported when fossil-based industries eventually leave the community;
- **Enact legislation that requires Ohio EPA to perform cumulative impact analysis** which includes the holistic footprint of the storage hub for both air and water permits;
- **Mitigate impacts to public lands and water bodies** that result from the development of storage hub related projects, especially the Ohio River;
- **Hold companies accountable for environmental accidents, explosions and spills** and ensure local communities are made whole following these events;
- **Encourage storage hub developers to provide financial assistance to regional health networks** to account for increased health impacts that result from air and water pollution from the petrochemical industry (i.e. health registry fund, hospital infrastructure, etc);
- **Ensure the significant economic benefits of the project return to the local community** so that they are able to mitigate for infrastructure impacts and anticipated declines in air quality.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, and we'd be happy to answer any questions.