

Testimony of Jack Thompson
Superintendent, Perry Local Schools
Before the Ohio Senate Public Utilities Committee
Hearing on Ohio Senate Bill 128: Zero-Emissions Nuclear Resource Program (ZEN)
June 1, 2017

Chairman Beagle and members of the Ohio Senate Public Utilities Committee, I'm Jack Thompson, Superintendent of Perry Local School District in Lake County. I appreciate the opportunity to provide our school district's perspective on the importance of implementing a Zero-Emissions Nuclear Resource Program, or ZEN, in Ohio through passage of Ohio Senate Bill 128.

For background, our school district serves 1,800 students from Perry Village, Perry Township and North Perry Village and employs 250 dedicated staff members. The mission of the Perry Local Schools is to inspire students to achieve excellence, pursue world class standards, and be self-directed, lifelong learners.

As you may know, our school district is home to Perry Nuclear Power Plant, which is facing an uncertain future due to significant challenges. These include energy markets that do not recognize or compensate the plant for the substantial benefits it brings to customers, the environment, and communities like ours.

Perry is a valued neighbor in the community with a strong presence that dates back 30 years. The plant is one of Lake County's largest employers, providing good full-time jobs for nearly 700 people, including many parents of students in our district, as well as several of my friends and neighbors. This doesn't include the thousands of additional jobs involved in ongoing maintenance and refueling projects at the plant.

The Perry Nuclear Plant contributed nearly \$14 million in local and state taxes last year and funds 85 percent of our school district's annual budget. We have been proud to partner with

the plant and its employees over the years on special projects that enrich the education experience we offer our students.

Uncertainty around Perry's future causes my district great concern as we plan for the future of the students and families who will pass through the halls of our school.

The continued operation of Perry yields great benefits to our school system. The plant's closure, especially when combined with cuts to state funding, would have a catastrophic effect. Our school district supports ZEN because we cannot allow Perry to close and forfeit the essential benefits this plant provides to our community, region and state.

Not only is the plant an important economic engine for Lake County, but also it contributes to the quality of life that our students, teachers, their families and our community enjoy. It is responsible for hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in payroll. And, as the county's top taxpayer, the plant provides millions more in tax revenue that, in addition to our schools, supports vital public services such as police and fire departments.

I urge you to support Ohio Senate Bill 128. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.