



Ohio Citizen Action

The premier grassroots mobilizing and organizing team in the Midwest

Before the Ohio Senate
Public Utilities Committee
Senator Bill Beagle, Chair
Thursday, June 8, 2017

Hearing on S.B. 155

Testimony of
Rachael Belz, Executive Director
Ohio Citizen Action

No consumer bailout of Kyger Creek and Clifty Creek

Chairman Beagle, Vice Chair LaRose, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Committee:

As Executive Director, I speak on behalf of 32,000 Ohio Citizen Action members from all parts of the state. I speak also for *all* Ohioans who bear the burden of our state's dependence on coal for electricity. I refer to 189,189 Ohio children who, according to the American Lung Association's 2017 State of the Air report, suffer from asthma and the 902,772 adult asthma sufferers, including myself. I'm speaking for people living in major population centers, like Cleveland, which once more ranks in the top ten nationwide for year-round particle pollution. I speak for the 5 million people who rely on the Ohio River for drinking water, a resource that's threatened by dozens of coal ash dams rated "high hazard" by U. S. EPA. I also speak for Ohio's electric consumers, who are now being asked to subsidize the

Kyger Creek and Clifty Creek coal plants, because their operators fear without a bailout the plants will close.

On behalf of all these people, I say let them close.

The argument that the plants are needed for national security falls flat, as not one electron has been used to enrich uranium in Piketon for over a decade and the recently announced closing of the Three Mile Island nuclear plant heralds the twilight of American nuclear power. One might argue that the plants are needed to meet civilian and industrial energy demands. However, energy demand has trended downward, as efficiency measures are adopted. And considering the age of these plants, their terrible environmental and public health impacts and the availability of cleaner, more efficient energy sources, I can't accept that argument either.

What lies at the heart of this bill and its companion H.B. 239, is an attempt to continue concentrating the economic benefits of these plants in a few hands and externalizing the costs to the rest of us. We don't have to continue operating in this way. We have a choice. More important, YOU have a choice today. I urge you to vote against passage of this bill.

Thank you.