



Ohio Sierra Club Nuclear Free Committee  
503 South Front Street, Suite 210  
Columbus, OH 43215



November 30, 2020

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee,

My name is Patricia Marida and I am the chair of the Ohio Sierra Club Nuclear Free Committee. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the 89 members of our committee and Sierra Club members and supporters around the state.

This testimony is in opposition to Ohio Sub. HB 104, the Advanced Nuclear Technology Helping Energize Mankind (ANTHEM) Act.

This is a bill that, in only 10 pages, gives vast powers and monetary capability to a nebulous “Ohio Nuclear Development Authority.” Senator Eklund, during sponsor testimony before this committee, asked Representative Stein who the Authority would be responsible to. Representative Stein could not name who that would be, but said he would get back to the committee. As of this date we have not seen an answer to this question.

This bill had 56 pages when it originated as HB 771 in the previous legislature. The original HB 104 had 34 pages. Both of these bills contained language from the website of eGeneration, a very small firm in the Cleveland area. This bill appears to be a handout to that entity, which consists of a small handful of people looking for public subsidies for their thorium work. No private firm or bank in the country will underwrite nuclear power development, since it is expensive, dangerous, unreliable and takes too long to deploy. This leaves the industry and its promoters looking for handouts from taxpayers and ratepayers. HB 104 has now been scrubbed of language that connects it to eGeneration.

There was no proponent testimony, either written or in person, in support of this bill. Where were the eGeneration members when proponent testimony was given?

In the shadow of the House Bill 6 scandal, our legislature needs to be very cautious about authorizing further subsidies for nuclear power.

The remainder of this testimony is information from our fact sheet

### **Ten Reasons to Oppose Ohio House Bill 104, a Radioactive Taxpayer Giveaway**

1. **One company benefits from HB 104.** The [original version of HB 104](#) and its predecessor [HB 771](#) tell a more complete story of the actors behind this bill. A single small private entity, [eGeneration of Cleveland](#), had a heavy hand in writing the bill and is its major beneficiary. Language on their website confirmed this.
2. **The intent is to build Thorium and/or molten salt reactors.** eGeneration and Energy from Thorium Foundation were two organizations made up of the same few individuals. The [Energy from Thorium Foundation](#) became the eGeneration Foundation in 2015. Though mention of eGeneration and Thorium has been removed, HB 104 is still about eGeneration developing a molten salt and/or a Thorium “advanced” nuclear reactor. The nuclear industry is trying to rebrand itself as new and innovative using terms like “advanced.” No Thorium reactor has been built because no private entity will finance it.
3. **Reprocessing of High Level Radioactive Waste (HLRW)** is necessary to obtain the fuel for a Thorium reactor. HB 104 uses the term “recycling” to refer to a technology that turns HLRW into a *much-harder-to-*

*contain and more voluminous liquid* in order to extract radioactive components. Reprocessing has been a disaster wherever it has occurred: [West Valley](#), NY; [Sellafield](#), England; [Rokkasho](#), Japan; [La Hague](#), France; [Kyshtym](#) in Russia. This is how radioactivity is “reduced” in recycling.

4. **Major shift of nuclear accountability.** Spreading nuclear research and development from federal to state entities and/or public-private partnerships is unprecedented, removing public accountability for cost and safety while retaining public liability, as well as losing regulatory control over radioactive materials and waste.
5. **Ohioans would pay for nuclear “cleanup.”** Since the proposed Nuclear Development Authority (NDA) will be a public entity, Ohio would be responsible for any and all costs associated with the NDA, including reactor decommissioning, dismantling and disposal of waste and damages resulting from spills and accidents.
6. **Because Wall Street Won’t Touch it,** all nuclear research, development and construction now depends on government and/or ratepayer handouts, safety compromises and government indemnity from liability. HB 104 sets up multiple ways for nuclear research and development to be subsidized by taxpayers. Calling a project a “demonstration” or “experimental” paves the way for the entire funding to be borne by taxpayers. The original bill says “may build one or more demonstration power-producing nuclear reactors located in this state.”
7. **More taxpayer costs and use of eminent domain (public necessity):** The current version of the bill calls the new Authority “an essential governmental function...for which public moneys may be spent and private property acquired.” The paves the way for eminent domain to be exercised by the new Authority (NDA.)
8. **Strange and incompatible twists.** The NDA would be within in the Ohio Department of Commerce. All NDA activity would be authorized and regulated by 9 governor-appointed board members. The NDA’s far-reaching regulatory and commerce-promoting functions are irretrievably incompatible.
9. **Weapons proliferation risk, dangerous comingling of military and civilian nuclear activities.** The military wants to reprocess HLRW to extract plutonium and uranium-233 for bombs. [Thorium reactors would produce U-233](#), a fissionable uranium isotope, as waste. This technology could be imitated and spread. See Beyond Nuclear’s “[Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing equals Weapons Proliferation.](#)”
10. **How about a real solution for Ohio’s energy needs?** Nuclear technology is [anything but “carbon and emissions free.”](#) Efficiency and renewable energy [cost less and produce more jobs.](#) Jobs and the grid are decentralized, eliminating major blackouts.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

/s/

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“Anyone who would substitute plutonium for carbon needs to think again.” ~ S. David Freeman