



An **AEP** Company

BOUNDLESS ENERGY™

February 22, 2023
Before the House Public Utilities Committee

Chairman Stein, Vice Chair Robb Blasdel, and Ranking Member Weinstein, my name is Marc Reitter and I am President and Chief Operating Officer for AEP Ohio. Thank you for inviting me here today to appear before the committee to provide an overview of the company and the history of our business in Ohio.

AEP Ohio is headquartered in Gahanna and is a wholly owned subsidiary of American Electric Power Inc. (AEP), headquartered in Columbus. AEP Ohio serves over 1.5 million customers in 61 of Ohio's 88 counties, covering over 10,000 square miles and serving nearly 1,000 communities.

Our history in Ohio began as early as 1907 with the operation of American Gas and Electric which served the communities of Canton and Bridgeport, Ohio. The company changed its name to American Electric Power in 1958 when it no longer provided gas services.

AEP acquired Columbus Southern Power Company in 1980 and moved its headquarters from New York to Columbus, Ohio. AEP Ohio operated Ohio Power and Columbus Southern independently until 2014 when Columbus Southern was merged into Ohio Power, leaving Ohio Power as the legal operating utility.

As electric restructuring began in the early 2000's, AEP Ohio divested its 13,161 MWs of generating assets as directed by law. Over time plants were either retired or transitioned to our unregulated affiliate where they were later sold. For the purpose of providing additional background information, I've included Attachment 1 of my testimony to illustrate the flow of electricity from generation to transmission, to distribution facilities, and finally to your home or business.

AEP Ohio is an electric distribution utility (EDU), commonly referred to as a wires company, responsible for delivering power directly to homes and businesses across our Ohio service territory. AEP Ohio does not own generation, but, like other EDUs, we procure generation supply for non-shopping customers through an auction process overseen by the PUCO.

Our primary focus is to ensure we provide safe and reliable power to our customers. We recognize that the interoperability of the grid is changing driven by technology and customer uses. Our aim is to anticipate customer needs and deliver solutions. We'll do that by using new technology, such as smart meters, circuit automation, and islanding capabilities to improve how we deliver electricity to your home.

The grid of the future will need to support increasingly complex demands for power and anticipated growth. It'll provide two-way communication between your house and our control systems, so we always know when you're having issues with your power, and we'll be able to proactively help you better manage your energy usage and costs.

We estimate we'll need to invest more than \$4.7 billion to continue to meet customer growth and continue to harden the grid infrastructure against more frequent severe weather events, increased demand and extremism. We also plan to invest in new technologies to proactively communicate with our customers.

The service we provide is essential and we look forward to working with all of you to pursue energy policies that move our state forward and keep Ohio on a path for growth. One example is permitting the utilities' to proactively invest in industrial site development to ensure our economic development sites remain competitive. This will reduce uncertainty and delay by making sites more shovel ready and increase Ohio's already attractive business climate.

AEP Ohio is committed to working with the members of this committee to move Ohio forward in a way that benefits all the communities and customers we serve.

Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions.

Attachment 1

