

Proponent Testimony by Jonathan Welle on House Bill 197
House Public Utilities Committee
September 20, 2023

Chairman Stein, Vice-Chair Blasdel, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the House Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on behalf of House Bill 197 (HB 197), a bill to enable a community solar pilot program in Ohio. My name is Jonathan Welle.

I am thrilled to support this bill to authorize community solar in Ohio. For residents of Ohio, community solar is a powerful way to expand the number of people who can see the benefits of clean solar energy directly on their bills. This bill will spur investment in the state, according to Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service, adding \$3.49 billion in gross state product, \$409.5 million in lifetime local tax revenue, and creating over 27 thousand job years! That means more Ohio businesses being able to invest in their communities and more family-wage jobs to keep our communities thriving. With federal legislation supporting solar energy investment already passed, there has never been a better time for community solar in Ohio!

I am also a member-owner of Cleveland Solar Cooperative. Cleveland Solar Cooperative is a cooperative business in Greater Cleveland developing community-owned solar arrays utilizing current laws and regulations in Ohio for net-metering. HB 197 would make it easier for Cleveland Solar Cooperative to invest in new arrays and provide more benefits to the member-owners of the Cooperative, therefore keeping even more of the dollars in Ohio's economy.

HB 197 is a common-sense win-win-win for all Ohioans. Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on behalf of HB 197.

Sincerely,
- Jonathan Welle