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Committees:

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General Government

Senators John Eklund and Frank LaRose – Sponsor Testimony
Senate Bill 128
Senate Public Utilities Committee
May 4, 2017

Good Morning Chairman Beagle, Vice-Chair LaRose, Ranking Member Williams, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to give sponsor testimony with Senator LaRose on Senate Bill 128 and to encourage your support on this legislation.

Senate Bill 128 would create a Zero Emission Nuclear Resource Program (ZEN) that fairly compensates Ohio's two nuclear plants, Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station in Ottawa County and Perry Nuclear Power Plant in Lake County, for the clean, reliable and secure power they generate.

Though nuclear power is among the cleanest, most reliable and most efficient forms of energy generation in the United States, nuclear plants across the country have begun to close prematurely, largely due to circumstances beyond their control. Wholesale electricity prices are artificially and unsustainably low, making it nearly impossible for nuclear plants to operate in Ohio and nearby states.

Continued operation of our nuclear assets is critical to the economic health of Ohio, and especially to the communities in which they are located. Closing them would impact thousands of families, result in painful job losses, and jeopardize tax dollars that help fund local governments, schools and vital community services. We can't stand by and let that happen in Ohio.

Nuclear plants are among the most dependable and environmentally friendly generation resources in operation. Closing Ohio's nuclear plants and replacing them with equivalent generation from other sources could add over 10 million tons of carbon emissions to the atmosphere.

A diverse energy portfolio that includes generation from a variety of fuel sources is a safeguard against volatile fuel prices, weather and other shocks to the system and the inability of other resources to provide the large, constant quantities of electricity that power our lives. We have been building a strong energy portfolio in Ohio, and we must maintain the diversity we have by properly valuing the benefits of nuclear.

If we do not address and resolve the challenge to our nuclear plants now, we will be leaving ourselves open to unfortunate and devastating outcomes that could have been prevented. It is our responsibility to take swift and definitive action on behalf of Ohio's residents to ensure a secure, clean energy future by protecting nuclear power.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 128, and we will be glad to answer any questions you may have.