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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **OMA Warns AEP Nuclear Bill Revives HB 6 Playbook**

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) today warned lawmakers that AEP-supported nuclear legislation would revive the House Bill 6 playbook by giving monopoly utilities a new path back into generation ownership and putting the financial risk on customers' electric bills.

House Bill 862 would create a new “nuclear project financing order” allowing electric distribution utilities to construct, own and operate nuclear generation. That would mark a major break from Ohio's competitive electric market and create a special exception in state law for monopoly utilities to get back into the generation business.

“Ohio should pursue nuclear energy, but not by handing monopoly utilities a new path back into generation ownership,” said Ryan Augsburger, OMA president. “This bill is not a nuclear development strategy. It is a utility ownership strategy. It takes Ohio backward toward the same customer-funded monopoly model utilities have been trying to revive since the HB 6 era.”

OMA said the proposal echoes the utility [“master plan”](#) revealed in House Bill 6-related documents, when utilities sought to expand customer-funded subsidies, increase monopoly control, rate-base new assets and shift more risk onto customers.

The association also said the same concepts keep reappearing under new names, including utility-owned generation, rate-based assets, alternative financing mechanisms and ratepayer-backed risk.

“This is the same movie with a new title,” Augsburger said. “During HB 6, utilities pushed customer-funded subsidies for aging plants. Now they are pushing customer-backed mechanisms for new utility-owned generation. The technology may be different, but the business model is the same. Utilities get guaranteed returns. Customers get the risk.”

The Northwest Ohio Aggregation Coalition (NOAC), which represents 125,000 residents and small businesses, also warned that the bill would revive the customer-funded subsidy model Ohio communities fought to eliminate.

“For years, northwest Ohio fought alongside Ohioans to get rid of these utility-owned nuclear plant subsidies,” said Tom Hays with the NOAC. “Together, we succeeded. We will fight this wrong-headed effort to bring this subsidy system back. Why? Because under this scheme, we paid about the highest electric rates in the whole country. It is a bad idea. This is a path toward electric rates like California's.”

The Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies (OACAA), whose member agencies serve low-income Ohioans in all 88 counties, said affordability and consumer protections must remain central as lawmakers consider major energy policy changes.

“Community action agencies across Ohio work every day with families already struggling to keep up with rising utility costs,” said OACAA Executive Director Jason Smith. “OACAA supports energy policies that strengthen reliability and Ohio’s future generation capacity, but affordability and consumer protections must remain central to the discussion. Low-income households should not be asked to shoulder additional long-term costs and financial risk through higher utility bills.”

OMA said Ohio can pursue advanced nuclear energy without reversing decades of competitive-market policy. In Ohio’s competitive generation framework, investment risk belongs with developers and investors, not captive ratepayers.

“This bill asks Ohioans to forget the lesson of HB 6,” Augsburger said. “When monopoly utilities use public policy to own generation, protect returns and shift risk, customers lose. Ohio should not reopen that door.”

OMA also raised concerns about provisions that could allow key approvals to occur by default if regulators fail to act within certain timelines. If the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio misses the bill’s deadlines, an application could be deemed compliant or approved by operation of law, forcing approval of key nuclear financing and ratemaking decisions without a full decision on the merits.

“This is not rigorous review. It is a utility fast lane,” Augsburger said. “A project that could affect customer bills for generations should never be approved by default because a regulatory clock ran out. The shot clock applies only to the utility. Customers are the ones left paying after the buzzer.”

OMA cautioned that the bill relies on utility long-term load projections as part of the finding of need, allowing utilities to use their own forecasts to justify construction backed by customer bills.

“Utilities should not be allowed to turn their own forecasts into permission slips to build on customers’ dime,” Augsburger said. “Forecast integrity matters. If projections are inflated, speculative or shaped by utility incentives, customers can be locked into paying for infrastructure the market may not need.”

OMA said the issue is not whether Ohio should pursue nuclear energy. The issue is whether monopoly utilities should be allowed to use nuclear development as a vehicle to re-enter generation ownership and place the financial risk on customers.

“Nuclear may have a role in Ohio’s energy future,” Augsburger said. “But AEP’s bill is not about unlocking nuclear innovation. It is about unlocking a customer-backed ownership model for monopoly utilities. Ohio should build the future, not rebuild the mistakes of HB 6.”

OMA urged lawmakers to reject the legislation and preserve Ohio’s competitive market structure. Nuclear investment should compete on its merits, not ride into law on a monopoly utility financing scheme backed by captive ratepayers.

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*The Ohio Manufacturers' Association is Ohio's largest statewide business association composed solely of manufacturers. Established in 1910, the OMA's mission is to protect and grow Ohio manufacturing. It represents manufacturers of all sizes in every subsector of the industry. Manufacturing is Ohio's largest economic sector, employing approximately 690,000 Ohioans and contributing more than \$138 billion annually to the economy. Visit [ohiomfg.com](http://ohiomfg.com), or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).*

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