

**Before**  
**Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee**  
**Interested-Party Testimony on Senate Bill 307**  
**By**  
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**On Behalf of the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel**

**December 6, 2022**

Hello Chair McColley, Vice-Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Martin, and Committee members. I hope you and your colleagues are well.

Consumers' Counsel Bruce Weston and I thank you and the bill sponsor (Senator Rulli) for this opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 307. We appreciate that the bill sponsor earlier met with OCC to discuss the issues. Previously, OCC has testified in favor of competitive markets, and not subsidies to utilities, for bringing consumers lower prices and greater innovation.

In OCC's testimony last week, OCC opposed Senate Bill 307 because of the subsidies for utilities like AEP. Those subsidies would be at the expense of consumers.

At that time, OCC testified that we would be reviewing the substitute bill that was circulated last Monday. After reviewing the substitute bill, OCC is changing its position from opponent to interested party. We appreciate that the substitute bill removes the subsidy language that OCC opposed.

The substitute bill has added the creation of a Task Force regarding electric vehicles. Lines 372-373 state the task force will "evaluate improvements needed to the electric utility grid to support the growing demand for electric vehicles." The task force has members from electric utilities, environmental groups, auto manufacturers, and public health organizations, etc. But there is no direct representation for residential utility consumers on the Task Force.

For stakeholder diversity and equity on the Task Force, the substitute bill should respectfully be broadened by including the Ohio Consumers' Counsel as a Task Force member. After all, utilities can be expected to charge consumers for the "improvements" to the electric utility grid that the task force will study.

OCC proposes that, after line 228, the following words be added to the substitute bill:

“(9)

The Consumers' Counsel or the Consumers' Counsel's designee;”

This would be similar to earlier legislative language for including OCC on the Select Committee on Telecommunications Regulatory Reform (Senate Bill 162, 128<sup>th</sup> General Assembly). There also is similar language for including OCC on the Ohio Public Benefits Advisory Board (O.R.C. 4928.58) and the Public Utilities Commission Nominating Council (O.R.C. 4901.021).

Thank you for your consideration.