



STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

BEFORE THE OHIO SENATE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE

ON

SENATE BILL 310

APRIL 9, 2014

**JACKIETHIA BUTSCH
OHIO OUTREACH MANAGER
SMALL BUSINESS MAJORITY**

Small Business Majority would like to thank Chairman Bill Seitz, Vice Chair LaRose, and other members of the Committee for accepting testimony on Senate Bill 310.

Small Business Majority is a small business organization founded and run by small business owners to focus on solving the biggest problems facing small businesses today. We actively engage small business owners and policymakers in support of solutions that promote small business growth and drive a strong economy. We advocate for policies that create jobs and maximize business opportunities and cost savings in clean energy, taxes, healthcare, access to capital and other areas. We have offices in 10 states across the country, including one here in Columbus.

The small business community is vast, diverse and dynamic. It includes 6 million small employers with 43 million employees and nearly 22 million self-employed people, with varying political points of view. But they have at least one critical thing in common: Together, these entrepreneurs create jobs, innovate and grow the economy. More importantly, in Ohio, for every one large business there are 236 small businesses¹ diligently working to reenergize the state's economy. In fact, small firms make up 98% of the state's employers,² which is why we believe it is critical to support our job creators in any way possible. This includes through strong energy efficiency standards that save them money, help drive innovation and create market opportunities.

Small Business Majority has used extensive opinion and economic research to educate policymakers and thought leaders on the small business community's support for energy efficiency. We have learned that small business owners understand the need for a 21st Century economy anchored in clean energy policies, and that they want to be part of the transformation. In fact, we recently released scientific opinion polling that found the majority of Ohio small business owners³ agree the state's current clean energy standards help them by reducing utility costs, spurring innovation and creating business opportunities. More than half agree Ohio electricity providers should be required to help small

¹ SBA Office of Advocacy. Small Business Profile: Ohio. <http://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/oh10.pdf>

² Ibid.

³ Small Business Majority, "Ohio Small Businesses Support Energy Efficiency Measures," Nov. 25, 2013;

³ Small Business Majority, "Ohio Small Businesses Support Energy Efficiency Measures," Nov. 25, 2013;

<http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org/small-business-research/clean-energy/OH-small-business-clean-energy-report.php>

businesses increase energy efficiency and save money through energy audits and rebates for installing energy-efficient products, among other services.

Given this strong support, we oppose efforts to roll back Ohio's energy efficiency standards in any way, as SB 310 would do. "Freezing" Ohio's current energy efficiency benchmarks for electricity utilities while a panel studies the issue would be bad news for the countless small business owners across the state who have already realized the benefit of these standards. Our polling found one out of three respondents stated they've had an energy audit conducted at their business, and nearly 60% of those audits resulted in lower utility bills.

Since Ohio's energy efficiency standards went into place in 2008, renewable electricity generation is up 64%, 3,200 jobs have been created and Ohioans are saving about a percent and a half⁴ on electricity bills. What's more, if utilities continue meeting the energy standard over the coming years, customers would save a total of nearly \$5.6 billion⁵ in avoided energy expenditures.

These standards have helped drive the development of a vibrant clean energy sector in our state, which already employs more than 25,000 people.

The bottom line is that entrepreneurs believe forward-thinking policies that improve energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable resources is good for business. It saves them money. It creates economic opportunity. We hope remember small businesses' strong support for our current energy efficiency standards as you consideration this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important matter for small businesses in Ohio.

⁴ Ohio State University's Center for Resilience, "Economic Analysis of Ohio's Renewable and Energy Efficiency Standards," Nov. 18, 2013; http://www.ohiomfg.com/wp-content/uploads/2013-11-22_lb_energy_deeps_nov_13_final.pdf

⁵ American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, Testimony, April 23, 2013; <http://aceee.org/files/pdf/testimony/elliott-ohio-senate-utility-committee.pdf>