



June 27, 2019

The Honorable Steve Wilson
Chairman, Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Ohio State Capitol
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Wilson and Committee members,

I am writing once again, in my capacity as Vice President of State Affairs for National Taxpayers Union (NTU), to express opposition to House Bill 6 (HB 6). NTU has a consistent track record of opposing government subsidies and, therefore, cannot support HB 6. Founded in 1969, NTU is the oldest non-partisan taxpayer advocacy group in the United States. Every one of our fifty years of existence has prioritized policies to lessen burdensome taxation, streamline inefficiencies in government, promote private markets, and so much more.

According to reports, members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee recently introduced a substitute to HB 6. However, upon further review, these changes have not altered our opinion of the bill. The legislation is still a taxpayer funded subsidy for nuclear and coal operators across the state. If passed in its current form, HB 6 will still levy a monthly charge on every Ohioan, subsidizing two failing nuclear plants operated by FirstEnergy Solutions and two coal plants operated by the Ohio Valley Electric Corporation.

While some argue that coal and nuclear energy should be components of our energy future, it's better to let the market decide rather than have the government pass policies favorable to specific generators that would crowd competitors out of the market.

The only way we will solve our nation's energy problems is through policies that will allow for true competition among energy sources. America's innovative spirit in energy technology will result in even more opportunities to adapt to our energy needs. The best thing government can do is to step aside and let innovation and market forces be the guide. Real solutions to energy challenges can be found when technology innovators are given the opportunity to compete. Supporting the state's ineffective nuclear sector at the expense of more innovative, cost-competitive and affordable natural gas power is not in the long-term best interest of the state.

Merely softening the blow by decreasing the amount of the subsidy does not change the fact that HB 6 is bad public policy. We have all heard the expression: If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck then it probably is a duck. That seems to be the case with HB 6. We respectfully urge you to reject this bill.

Sincerely,

Leah Vukmir, Vice President of State Affairs
National Taxpayers Union