



## Press Release

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### **Clean energy advocates urge state lawmakers: “Don’t forget Energy Efficiency!”**

As lawmakers debate costs and benefits of energy sources, the cheapest, cleanest and fastest source flies under Statehouse radar: Energy Efficiency

**While other Midwest states enact 20% Energy Efficiency standards, Ohio considers only a 5% standard—weakest in USA**

COLUMBUS, OHIO – As state lawmakers weigh the costs and benefits of meeting Ohio’s growing electric power appetite with traditional energy sources like coal versus new, emerging sources like wind and solar, clean energy advocates are calling on the General Assembly not to overlook the cheapest, cleanest, and fastest way to develop of all energy sources: energy efficiency.

Energy efficient furnaces, lights, appliances, and other products and equipment use new technology to supply the same amount or more of heat, light, performance, etc., but using less energy than older, energy-gobbling ones. From replacing old, incandescent light bulbs with curly, compact fluorescent lights to adding insulation to houses and room occupancy sensors to offices, studies show that every dollar invested in energy efficiency can return an average of two to three dollars in energy savings.

But even though energy efficiency is proven to save consumers money, stimulate jobs and investment, and reduce harmful emissions, Governor Strickland’s electric utility restructuring proposal (Ohio Senate Bill 221) proposes a weak energy efficiency standard for utility companies to implement.

The proposed standard calls for investor-owned electric utility companies in Ohio to supply 25% of future load growth in power demand by 2025 with energy efficiency. According to PUCO estimates, Ohio’s electric power demand is expected to grow by about 20% by 2025. As such, S.B. 221’s standard would achieve a net energy savings of only about five percent ( $25\% \times 20\% = 5\%$ ).

A 5% energy efficiency standard would be the weakest such standard in the nation. By contrast, recent standards adopted in other states have ranged from 10% by 2022 in Virginia to 20% by 2025 in Illinois and Minnesota.

“When it comes to saving energy, this is hardly a Whopper. It’s more like a Whimpy Burger. Lawmakers should be asking, ‘Where’s the beef?’” said Jack Shaner, Public Affairs Director for the OEC.

“This is a golden opportunity for Ohio to cash in on the many benefits of energy efficiency. Unfortunately, it’s now Strike Two after the Governor and the Ohio Senate fanned on strengthening this policy. Fortunately, it’s not too late for the Ohio House to knock it out of the park.”

The groups are calling on lawmakers to strengthen the standard by tying the Energy Efficiency Standard to delivered load, not growth in load demand. Tying S.B. 221’s EE standard to 1% of delivered load—instead of load growth—would reduce electricity use by an estimated 11.5% by 2025 and save Ohio consumers an estimated \$1.7 Billion, according to estimates by the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance. The groups also urged lawmakers to:

- Raise the Energy Efficiency Standard to a more aggressive level. As proposed, Ohio Senate Bill 221 will yield only about 5% savings by 2025. This would be the weakest EE standard in the US
- Set periodic benchmarks to assure that utility companies meet annual targets, starting out slow then building over time
- Require the PUCO to set evaluation rules, cost-effectiveness rules, and rules for non-compliance
- Consider incentives for early or over-achievement
- Maximize the Energy Efficiency Standard by continuing to keep it separate from the Renewable Energy and Advanced Energy standards

“Ohio, like many Midwest states, is facing a genuine energy crisis” said Martin Kushler, Director of Utilities Program for the Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE). “It’s not a matter of shortages, but of economic costs. Roughly \$20 billion drains from the Ohio economy every year to import energy fuels of all types...more than twice the amount of just seven years ago. States like Ohio should be doing everything possible to make themselves more energy efficient.”

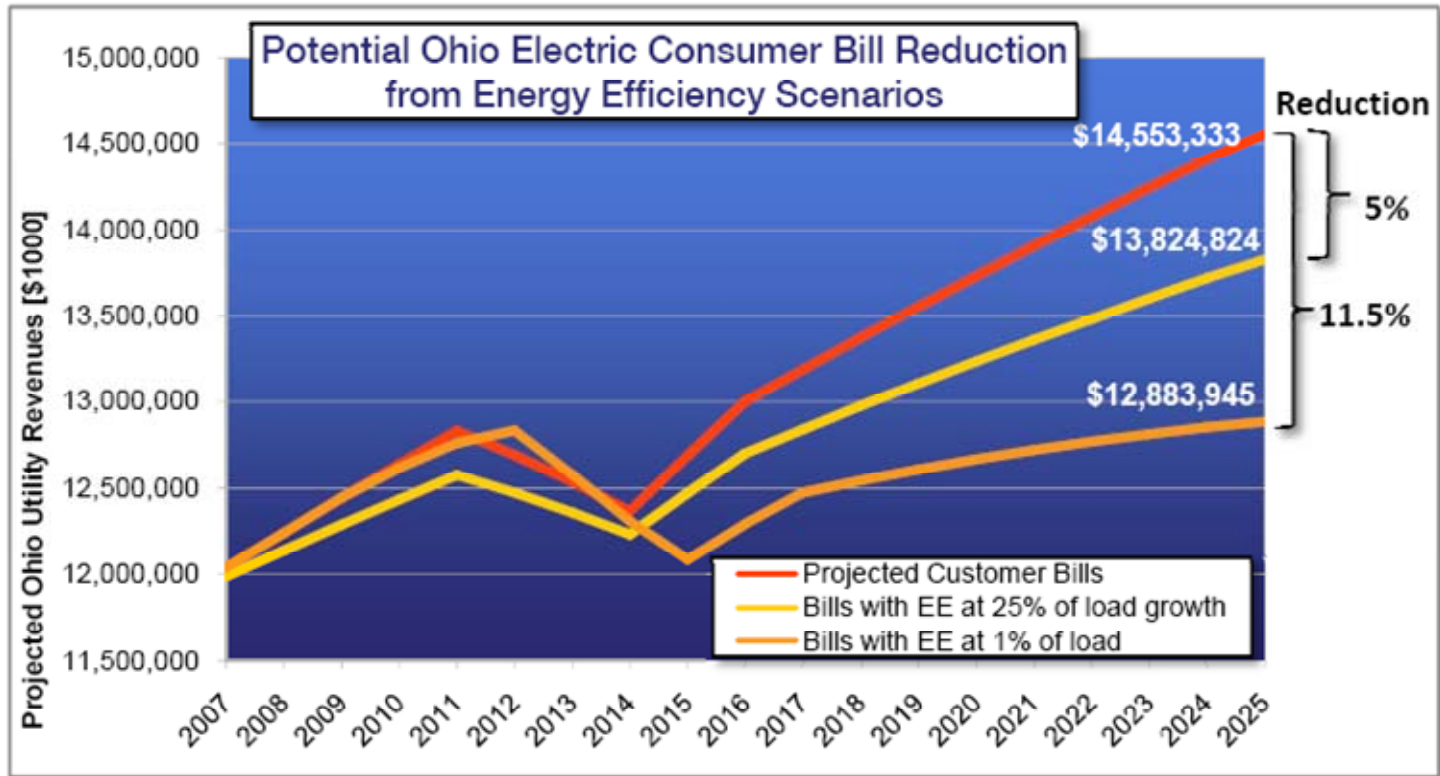
The OEC along with the ACEEE point to government and other studies that document that:

- Energy efficiency is the fastest, cleanest, and cheapest of all options to meet growing energy demands.
- Energy efficiency is a proven money saver. Two decades of experience document that state energy efficiency programs cost only two cents to 3.7 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh), up to two-thirds less than the 10 cents/kWh that utilities would typically have paid for a comparable electric supply. In addition, recent market auction prices of coal-powered electric have averaged 6 to 10 cents/kWh...and that’s without anticipated carbon costs of 1 to 2 cents extra.
- While Ohio is a coal-producing state, it imports two-thirds of the coal it burns to make electricity, sending billions of dollars to other to meet energy demand.
- As technology continues to improve, the cost of high-efficiency lights, appliances, and other energy saving technologies continues to decline, while the cost of production and environmental controls and remediation continues to climb for coal.

“Which is cheaper? Shelling out 10 cents for every kilowatt hour of electricity used from the wall outlet? Or investing two to three cents for every kilowatt hour saved through energy-efficient lights, appliances, and other energy-saving technologies? Do the math. You don’t have to pass a high-school proficiency test to figure out that the best bang for the ratepayer’s buck is energy efficiency,” said Shaner.

The mission of the Ohio Environmental Council ([www.theOEC.org](http://www.theOEC.org)) is to secure healthy air, land, and water for all who call Ohio home. The OEC is a network of more than 100 local and state environmental-conservation organizations.

Tale of the tape: Tying S.B. 221's EE standard to 1% of delivered load—instead of load growth—would reduce electricity use by an estimated 11.5% by 2025 and save Ohio consumers an estimated \$1.7 Billion.



Source: Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance - [www.mwalliance.org](http://www.mwalliance.org)