

February 1, 2019

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor of Ohio
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) is an incredibly important agency in setting the course for Ohio's energy policy, and is the primary decision-making body on which many aspects of Ohio's economic future hinges: whether Ohio does its part to diversify our energy portfolio with renewables and efficiency; whether our state readies a 21st century workforce tapped into the clean tech revolution, and; whether Ohio is viewed as a leader or laggard in the clean energy era.

As organizations representing Ohio's environmental and conservation community, most of whom regularly practice before PUCO, we write to convey serious concern about the impending appointment of a new PUCO commissioner. All the PUCO commissioner candidates presented to you on January 31st by the PUCO Nominating Council appear to possess the qualifications and experience necessary to fulfill the basic duties and responsibilities of the job. However, one candidate in particular stands out because he carries with him extreme bias demonstrated through a storied history of anti-clean energy efforts on multiple fronts and over many years.

Mr. Sam Randazzo has worked earnestly to dismantle Ohio's energy efficiency resource standard and renewable portfolio standard (RPS) since 2012 via multiple pieces of legislation. He was supportive of the legislation that froze Ohio's standards for two years, worked behind the scenes with the study committee that issued a faulty report allegedly assessing the costs and benefits of the RPS and EERS, and even continued to push the repeal and weakening of these standards after Governor Kasich's veto of a bill that would have essentially eliminated the standards. Additionally, due to Mr. Randazzo's representation of anti-wind energy activists at the Ohio Power Siting Board, and his advocacy in the legislature supporting overly-burdensome wind siting requirements that have led to a *de facto* moratorium on new wind farms, there is no question that Mr. Randazzo does not subscribe to the "all of the above" energy strategy the DeWine Administration has promoted.

Given this bias, we oppose the prospective appointment of Mr. Sam Randazzo.

The sustained efforts to weaken Ohio's RPS and EERS, while not ultimately successful, coupled with the policy backsliding on wind energy and energy efficiency at both the Ohio legislature and the PUCO have cast a pall on Ohio as a state hostile towards clean energy and the businesses that wish to invest in the state. This reputation is something that we had hoped to begin turning around with your Administration and as the 133rd Ohio General Assembly begins its work, but if Mr. Randazzo occupies a seat at the PUCO, we believe this would be very difficult to accomplish.

As organizations striving to reduce carbon pollution coming from the electric utility sector, we urge you to very carefully consider the applicants and identify a forward-thinking individual who is not entrenched in the status quo of energy generation, or heavily biased against clean energy stakeholders. Also, given our organizations' collective experience engaged in PUCO cases and proceedings, we agree that the most judicious and effective PUCO Commissioners facilitate a fair process, and do not bring personal agendas or biases to the role of regulator. Selecting an applicant who is only interested in doing "business as usual," and potentially naming that individual as PUCO Chair, would do a great disservice to the Commission itself and the future of energy development in Ohio.

Our organizations look forward to working closely with the DeWine Administration and PUCO to develop a comprehensive energy strategy that reduces emissions, creates jobs, grows the economy and protects consumers. By seating a forward-thinking, objective Commissioner, you will help to ensure that significant progress is not lost, and position Ohio as a leader in energy innovation.

Respectfully,

Environmental Law and Policy Center

National Audubon Society

Natural Resources Defense Council

Ohio Environmental Council

Sierra Club Ohio Chapter

CC: Laurel Dawson, Chief of Staff
Michael Hall, Director of Policy