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Business

ATHENS COUNTY, OHIO

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May 25, 2012

Chairman Todd A. Snitchler
The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
180 E. Broad St.
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: In the matter of long-term forecast reports of Ohio Power Company and Columbus Southern Power Company and related matters (PUCO Case Nos. 11-346-EL-SSO and 11-348-EL-SSO)

Dear Chairman Snitchler:

The Athens County Economic Development Council works to be a catalyst for quality jobs and progress in Athens County and throughout the region by creating a seamless network of economic development resources through partnerships with other organizations, businesses and government entities.

The Council would like to offer its support for the development and implementation of the Turning Point Solar project in neighboring Noble County. We believe this project is valuable for a balanced approach to long-term energy management that will impact economic development in our region.

Included are the following issues that support our endorsement:

Turning Point Solar: Part of a Balanced Approach to Economic Development

- 1) We believe that our region is best served by an economic development and energy generation strategy that is balanced. We are excited by the prospects associated with new oil and gas production technologies that should bring substantial job and wealth creation to the Appalachian Ohio region. As important as oil and gas drilling is likely to be to the future of our state, we in rural southeastern Ohio deserve to benefit from a diversified renewable energy future. Other forms of renewables such as hydropower, waste heat recovery, clean coal, and solar strategies, just to name a few, also have direct relevance to this part of the state. The 50 mw Turning Point Solar Array allows the southeastern region of our state to participate in a balanced approach to energy generation, and to do so in a meaningful way.

Substantial Environmental Benefits: Green Energy from Marginal Lands

- 2) One asset (some might say liability) that our region of the state possesses in abundance is land that has been mined. In the best circumstances this land is reclaimed, but often this is not the case. The development group at Turning Point Solar and AEP deserve much praise for finding a purposeful use for some 700 acres of reclaimed land. This land was previously mined by one of the largest dragline

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and shovel operations, the Big Muskie. Indeed, large stretches of Appalachian Ohio might be viewed as a utility scale solar project waiting to happen: seemingly endless acreage of marginal land, with few remaining environmental obstacles to development that are crisscrossed by transmission lines that were needed in a previous era to bring electricity to the giant shovels.

Significant Direct Job Creation

- 3) We are grateful for the focus that the developers of the Turning Point Solar project have placed on job creation in Ohio. The construction and installation of the 50 mw project will create more 300 jobs. Over 100 construction jobs will be created in each of the three phases in which the array is to be built. Even with the strong prospects of the oil and gas industry, these jobs are much needed and will be filled by Ohioans.

TPS: Building Out an Ohio Supply Chain

- 4) In addition, the developers of the Turning Point Solar project believe that close to 85 percent of the goods and services required for the construction of the project will be sourced in Ohio, beginning with the solar panels. This supplier, Isofoton North America, agreed to locate its factory in Napoleon Ohio when this order of 250,000 panels was secured. When fully operational, more than 300 permanent manufacturing jobs will be created at the Napoleon plant.

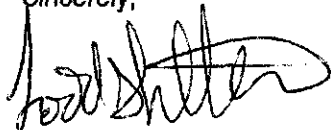
TPS: A Rural Project with Rural Benefits

- 5) The rural focus of this project is worth special attention and commendation. Currently, a majority of technology-based economic development occurs in urban parts of the state or in the immediate vicinity of research universities. The benefits of the Turning Point Solar project will be enjoyed primarily by rural and small-town residents in economically challenged regions of southeastern and northwestern Ohio.

Chairman Snitchler, we appreciate your consideration and support for this strategic TPS project in our region.

PLEASE DOCKET THIS LETTER IN PUCO CASE Nos. 11-346-EL-SSO and 11-348-EL-SSO.

Sincerely,



Todd Shelton
Director,
Athens County Economic Development Council