



January 20, 2025

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
180 E Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: PUCO Case No. 24-1112-EL-ESS FirstEnergy Request to Weaken Electric Reliability Standards

Chair French, Commissioners, and Staff of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio,

My name is Lauren McNally, and I am proudly serving my second term in the Ohio House of Representatives. I represent Ohio's 58th House District, which includes Youngstown and surrounding towns and villages. I am writing to express my serious concern regarding FirstEnergy's request in Case No. 24-1112-EL-ESS to weaken Ohio's electric reliability standards by allowing longer and more frequent service interruptions.

Electric service is not a luxury. It is the backbone of Ohio's economy, public safety, and quality of life. Households depend on reliable power for heating and cooling, refrigeration, medical equipment, and communications. Businesses depend on it to operate, employ workers, and remain competitive. Critical infrastructure such as hospitals, water systems, and emergency services depends on service without interruption. Any proposal that would allow deterioration in reliability standards therefore carries profound economic, health, and public safety implications.

Ohio ratepayers have already paid billions of dollars in transmission, distribution, and grid modernization charges over the last two decades. Those investments were justified to customers on the promise of a stronger, more resilient, and more reliable electric system. It is deeply troubling for a utility to now argue that, rather than delivering on those commitments, the state should simply lower the bar for what constitutes acceptable performance.

I recognize that Ohio's electric grid faces real challenges, including aging infrastructure and increasingly severe weather. However, the appropriate response to these challenges is targeted investment, prudent planning, and accountability for performance, not regulatory retreat. Weakening reliability standards shifts the burden of those challenges away from the utility and onto families, workers, and small businesses who bear the real costs of outages through lost income, spoiled food, business disruption, and risks to health and safety.

As a legislator, looking out for the best interests of my constituents, I urge the Commission to reject any proposal that would normalize or excuse declining reliability. Instead, I encourage PUCO to hold utilities to clear, measurable, and enforceable performance standards that reflect the essential nature of electric service in modern life. Ohioans deserve a grid that works, especially as our economy becomes more electrified and more dependent on reliable power. With the enactment of HB 15, the Ohio Legislature has shown that grid reliability is a top priority. I respectfully request that the Commission deny FirstEnergy's request to weaken reliability rules



and continue to prioritize strong consumer protections, transparency, and accountability in this proceeding. Thank you for your consideration of my views and for your continued service to the people of Ohio.

If you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (614) 466-9435, or via email at Rep58@ohiohouse.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lauren McNally".

Lauren McNally
State Representative
Ohio's 58th House District