

press release

WIRE-Net

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**WIRE-Net Supports Ohio Manufacturers' Association's
Amendments to Ohio Energy Efficiency Bill**

Substitute S.B. 58 amendment safeguards lower electricity rates and preserves advances made in energy efficiency and renewable energy throughout the state.

CLEVELAND, OHIO (November 21, 2013) – WIRE-Net (www.wire-net.org), a manufacturing support group representing 300 Ohio manufacturers and their 19,000 employees, has joined a rapidly-expanding coalition supporting the Ohio Manufacturers' Association's compromise amendment to Ohio Senate Bill 58.

The original bill (S.B. 58) was proposed by members of the Senate Public Utilities Committee to overhaul Ohio's current policy pertaining to energy efficiency and advanced and renewable energy standards. That bill has been hotly contested by business and consumer groups statewide in Senate hearings over the past two months.

The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) and other groups recently submitted Substitute Senate Bill 58 (Sub. S.B. 58) which would protect the economic development opportunities brought on by reduced electric rates as a result of Ohio's current policies; sustain energy efficiency measures that have been implemented by energy users; and maintain a burgeoning clean energy industry in Ohio.

The compromise bill, while giving large energy customers an "opt out" choice, would require such customers to bid their savings into wholesale electricity markets thereby lowering electric rates for all electricity consumers.

WIRE-Net's decision to oppose S.B. 58, and subsequently support the OMA backed Sub. S.B. 58, was based on the organization's efforts to support Ohio manufacturers by providing affordable electricity, and working to create a more competitive business climate that attracts new business to the state.

"Ohio's economic situation has improved markedly over the past seven years, with vast improvements in the manufacturing sector, which is outperforming other states" said WIRE-Net president and executive director John Colm. "What's needed most for Ohio manufacturers is long-term assurance of the lowest cost of energy. That means maintaining and incentivizing plant energy efficiency programs, which reduce the cost of production, improve competitiveness and insulate companies from electricity rate changes. The state's current energy policies do just that, and must be kept in place."

Colm also pointed out the advantages of growing a vibrant alternative energy industry, which has added thousands of jobs in Ohio. "The use of renewable energy offers remarkable price stability," he stated. "For instance, wind energy developers negotiate 20-year purchase power agreements that mitigate the risk of exposure to volatile pricing in electricity markets."

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About WIRE-Net: WIRE-Net, (www.wire-net.org), is a non-profit economic development organization made up of hundreds of manufacturers throughout Ohio. The organization serves as a consultant, collaborator, referral source and hands-on provider of services in workforce development, growth and operational improvement initiatives, peer to peer and expert knowledge sharing, supply chain development, and urban redevelopment. John Colm is President and Executive Director and can be reached via email at JColm@wire-net.org or by phone at 216.588.1445.