

**Subject:** Reply Comment: 25-0349-EL-ORD  
**Sent:** 12/12/2025, 2:42:15 PM  
**From:** Stephen Renner<stephen.renner@gahanna.gov>  
**To:** publiccomments@puco.ohio.gov; docketing@puco.ohio.gov  
**Cc:** Merisa Bowers; Jeremy VanMeter  
**Attachments:** [Renner Bowers PUCO Net Metering.pdf](#)

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Dear PUCO Docketing Division,

Please accept the attached PDF (text copied below) as a public comment for docket number 25-0349-EL-ORD. This is an official statement from Councilwoman Bowers and Councilman Renner of the City of Gahanna, and we request that our comment is labeled as such on the public comment page for 25-0349-EL-ORD.

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December 12, 2025

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

Re: Case No. 25-0349-EL-ORD – Net Metering Review

Dear Chair French and PUCO Commissioners and Staff,

As elected leaders entrusted by the residents of Gahanna, we bring both experience and community perspective to this discussion. Mr. Renner is a long-serving councilmember with a professional background in sustainability, resilience, and public infrastructure. Ms. Bowers is an at-large councilmember who has twice earned decisive support from voters and is a committed advocate for sustainable, forward-looking municipal policy. Together we share a deep commitment to responsible, resilient planning for our city and region.

Today we write to express our strong support for the PUCO Staff's recommendation to maintain Ohio's current net metering framework without reduction or restriction. We further urge the Commission to consider the critical role that distributed energy resources (DERs), especially residential and commercial solar, play in enhancing grid resilience, managing peak load, and supporting long-term system reliability for all Ohioans.

## **Net Metering Strengthens Community and Regional Resilience**

Gahanna is part of a rapidly growing region whose electricity needs are rising sharply, driven in part by the unprecedented expansion of hyperscale data centers, AI compute facilities, and commercial electrification. These facilities require enormous and continuous power supply, often measured in tens or hundreds of megawatts. The resulting strain on the transmission and distribution system has created new reliability pressures across Central Ohio.

At the same time, local governments like ours are tasked with building communities that are resilient in the face of climate-driven weather volatility, rising peak temperatures, and increasing stress on essential infrastructure. Net metering is one of the few customer-level tools we have that directly improves resilience, by:

- Lowering peak demand through localized generation
- Reducing stress on aging distribution circuits
- Encouraging diversification of the resource mix
- Providing ancillary resilience benefits during outages through paired storage
- Supporting local investment in clean energy infrastructure

These benefits accrue not only to customers who install solar, but to the stability of the grid as a whole, including the large commercial entities whose needs are cited by AEP Ohio as justification for revisiting net

metering.

## **AEP Ohio's Position is Inconsistent with Their Stated Regional Growth Needs**

AEP Ohio has argued that the net metering rules should be modified because they believe current compensation structures impose system-wide costs. However, this argument is inconsistent with AEP's public support for substantial new generation and grid expansion projects to meet the electric needs of massive datacenter developments.

If Ohio is experiencing an extraordinary increase in demand, as AEP has repeatedly stated, then customer-sited solar generation is not a burden; it is an essential relief valve. Net metering reduces the need for expensive new peaker plants, mitigates congestion, and defers costly system upgrades funded by ratepayers. In other words, the same company claiming to need large new supply resources should not simultaneously oppose one of the few mechanisms consumers have to add clean, low-cost capacity back to the grid.

The comments submitted by the Power a Clean Future Ohio (PCFO) in our opinion correctly identified the flaws in AEP's assumptions and the ways in which their proposals would undermine consumer rights and energy independence. We echo those concerns and urge the Commission to weigh them heavily.

## **Preserving Net Metering Protects Consumer Choice and Equity**

Net metering is more than an energy policy; it is a rights-based policy that preserves the ability of residents and businesses to generate their own power, reduce their bills, and contribute to a reliable energy system. Weakening net metering would disproportionately harm:

- Homeowners making long-term investments in solar
- Residents seeking protection from rising energy costs
- Small businesses with thin margins
- Local governments attempting to meet resilience and sustainability goals

As Central Ohio's grid faces new and unprecedented power demands, it is essential that we strengthen policies that empower residents to participate in energy generation and resilience.

For the City of Gahanna, for Central Ohio, and for Ohio's long-term energy stability, maintaining strong and fair net metering rules is both sound policy and sound governance. We respectfully ask the Commission to uphold the PUCO Staff's recommendation and reject proposals that would diminish the value of distributed energy resources for Ohio's residents, communities, and grid.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen A. Renner  
City Councilmember, Ward 1

Merisa K. Bowers  
City Councilmember, At Large