

**Chairman Aric Nesbitt  
House Energy Committee**

Good morning Chairman Nesbitt, Vice Chair Glenn and all members of the House Energy Committee. My name is Kim Coonan and I am a member of the Bay County Board of Commissioners.

Thank you for allowing me to be here today to discuss my concerns regarding Michigan's energy future. I appreciate your time, and will keep my testimony brief.

Today, we have the opportunity to help Michigan stay on a track of economic growth and success. As a retiree of Bay City Light & Power, and a current small-business owner, I want to stress just how important a fair, sustainable energy policy is to Michigan's growing economy.

As I'm sure you're aware, small business is essential to a financially healthy Michigan. Communities across the state rely on the job creation and economic boosts supported by small businesses. And, small-business owners depend on reliable, affordable electricity to keep our businesses open.

I own a small restaurant in Bay City, and without reliable electricity I would not be able to operate successfully. It's important that I not only know the lights will turn on every morning I open, but also that my bills will stay steady throughout the year. My electric bill is essential to maintaining the bottom line of my business.

Just as I need certainty that the lights will stay on and costs will not spike unexpectedly, I understand that utilities need certainty there will be a return on their investments in new power generation. With the looming capacity shortfall we've heard about, we have to make sure Michigan is planning for the energy needs of the future.

For this reason, I support returning our energy market to full government regulation, and urge your support of House Bill 4298.

We've seen the problems uncertainty can have on business – a perfect example is the recent scare in the Upper Peninsula when one large choice customer put everyone else at risk of facing extreme price spikes. Thankfully, a solution was found that saved Upper Peninsula residents and business owners from suffering.

However, that type of risk, even if unrealized, is not something my small business could survive. It puts me at ease knowing that my utility is planning to meet the demands of my business now and into the future, but it scares me to think that one large choice customer could potentially raise the costs of running my business by moving back and forth between providers.

The Legislature needs to pass an energy policy that puts Michigan first. Full regulation will give utilities the certainty they need to build clean power plants, and it will give me the certainty that my business will have the power it needs to stay open. Please support House Bill 4298 — a plan that will keep Michigan on the path to economic success. Thank you.