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## Columbus (OH) NAACP

### National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

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Testimony for the Ohio House of Representatives  
Finance and Appropriations Committee

Tuesday April 12, 2011

From  
Noel Williams  
President, Columbus NAACP

Good Afternoon Chairman and committee members. My name is Noel Williams and I am the president of the Columbus NAACP. I am here today to speak in opposition to Sub HB 153 in regards to the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel's (OCC) proposed budget.

The OCC provides benefits that save money for residential customers and Ohio's businesses and industry. For instance, when the OCC is able to reduce an electric rate increase by \$10 million, approximately 60 percent (in this scenario, \$6 million) of those savings go toward reducing the electricity rates for businesses and industry. The other 40 percent (or \$4 million) benefit the residential customer class. Thus, the OCC advocacy for lower utility rates keeps Ohio attractive for businesses and industry. The OCC is the only agency that advocates on behalf of all of the residential customers who pay utility bills. Again this benefits residential and business customers. In addition, to the OCC's advocacy in proceedings before the PUCO and other regulatory agencies, the OCC offers a toll-free hot line that helps thousands of customers every year with utility issues from possible disconnections, to billing disputes and giving helpful information about utility issues, which definitely assist many of the NAACP's constituites.

As the OCC celebrates its 35th anniversary the agency has literary saved utility customers over \$10 billion. These are both business and residential customers. Considering these facts, the NAACP stands opposed to this or any legislation to cut OCC budget. Thank you for the opportunity to address you this afternoon.