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Labor, Environmental Leaders Disappointed in Ohio PUCO's Decision to Nix Solar Project that Would Create 650 Northwest Ohio Jobs

COLUMBUS, OH (January 14, 2013) Labor and environmental leaders across Ohio today spoke out against the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio's (PUCO) decision not to move forward with AEP-Ohio's proposed Turning Point solar farm project which would have been located in South-central Ohio.

David Foster, Executive Director of the BlueGreen Alliance:

"At a time when we can't afford to squander any job creation opportunities that present themselves, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio's decision to reject a project that would both expand renewable energy use and create necessary jobs for local returning veterans is disappointing. This investment would have also helped to revitalize nearby businesses.

"Today, we still need to create jobs wherever we can. A purely political maneuver such as this one has no place in today's economic climate. Nothing is more important than the six-hundred and fifty jobs the Turning Point Solar – Isofoton North America factory would create."

Dave McCall, Director of United Steelworkers District 1:

"There's no better time than now to roll up our sleeves and get to work on projects like this one. The economic benefits and job creation associated with this project should be coming to Ohio now. We should always take advantage of the reality of both permanent and 'indirect' job creation whenever possible. These are the kinds of permanent renewable energy investments we should be making this year for success in future years."

Dan Sawmiller, Senior Campaign Representative for Sierra Club:

"Isofoton just opened a new solar panel factory for the Turning Point project in Napoleon, Ohio, and they were planning to hire veterans to fill many of the 300 positions. As a combat veteran of the Iraq War, I am frustrated and disappointed that the commission would withdraw support from a project that would have provided an employment opportunity for so many vets."

Amanda Woodrum, Energy Researcher of Policy Matters Ohio:

"This project would create great jobs, produce clean power, and redirect money back into Ohio. PUCO should support, not thwart, AEP on this idea - it's exactly the kind of innovation our renewable energy law was supposed to promote."

Tracy Sabetta, The National Wildlife Federation Ohio:

"America's energy independence hinges on the development of clean, renewable sources of energy here at home that will reduce our dependence on oil, reduce dangerous air pollution, create American energy jobs and improve public health. The decision by the PUCO is bad for our environment and bad for our economy here in Ohio."

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The BlueGreen Alliance is a national partnership of labor unions and environmental organizations dedicated to expanding the number and quality of jobs in the clean economy. Launched in 2006, the strategic partnership now brings together major U.S. labor unions and America's most influential environmental organizations and unites more than 15 million members and supporters in pursuit of good jobs, a clean environment and a green economy. Visit www.bluegreenalliance.org.