

I'm here to make a case against the passage of SB 250. I have two points.

The penalty that this bill would add to the Criminal Mischief statute is far more extreme than almost any other penalty laid out in that section of the revised code. Under the proposed law, I could go onto my neighbor's farm and, with purpose to interfere with their use of their property, set a fire in their field that created a risk of their physical harm, and I would only be guilty of a fourth degree felony. But if I were to go onto a pipeline easement on my own property and, without damaging any property, without risking harm to any person, put my own body in the way of construction, I would be guilty of a first degree felony. And any organization that suggested I do it or provided any support while I did it would be guilty of complicity with a MANDATORY fine of ten times the MAXIMUM fine I could possibly be punished with. (2909.07 Div C. Sec. 4)

Why is such an extreme penalty necessary? I want to bring your attention to the list of things that would be considered "critical infrastructure." A chemical manufacturing facility? A steel-making facility? Steel and chemical plants and oil and gas extraction are not public utilities, and they are not critical to life in Ohio. What is critical is drinkable water and a livable climate. We don't need natural gas, and we certainly don't need the massive excess of natural gas that would be delivered to other states through the pipelines that inspired this bill. We do need water.

My last point is that the oil and gas industry does not have the best interests of the people of Ohio at heart. Don't believe that these corporations will treat us decently. Pipeline manufacturers have already spilled enough oil and gas to prove that they don't care about our safety.