



**Michigan
Agri-Business
Association**

1501 North Shore Drive, Suite A
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

www.miagbiz.org

Telephone (517) 336-0223

Fax (517) 336-0227

April 29, 2015

To: Chairman Aric Nesbitt and Members of the House Energy Policy Committee
From: Jim Byrum, President, Michigan Agri-Business Association

Re: Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 4297

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am submitting this written testimony on behalf of the Michigan Agri-Business Association, a trade association representing more than 400 agribusinesses and entities involved in Michigan's thriving agriculture sector.

Our members are deeply concerned about the future of energy efficiency programs in our state, and we oppose H.B. 4297 as currently written because it would roll back mandatory energy efficiency standards for Michigan.

Such standards have been critical to the progress our industry has made on energy efficiency measures. Because of the unique nature and seasonality of what we do, as well as the rural location of many agribusinesses, energy efficiency programs provide additional certainty for our businesses. To access these benefits, our industry has worked directly with Michigan's incumbent utilities to achieve new energy efficiency programs for agriculture in recent years.

Although agribusinesses generally have a good relationship with our utilities, we believe energy efficiency mandates formed the basis for the progress that has been made. Given the delays we faced in establishing energy efficiency programs through the utilities, we believe these new programs would not have been achieved without the standards in place. It was only after intervening in cases at the Michigan Public Service Commission that the major utilities stepped forward to provide meaningful programs for our industry.

Additionally, energy efficiency mandates will be important into the future as our industry deploys modern technology to reduce energy waste. As technology advances and new opportunities become available for agriculture, mandatory energy efficiency standards will ensure we can continue to make progress.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to include mandatory energy efficiency standards in H.B. 4297 and we oppose efforts that do not include them. Such mandatory standards have been

necessary to effect change and spark innovation, and they will continue to be important into the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony for the record on this critical issue facing Michigan's agriculture industry.

Sincerely,

Jim Byrum
President
Michigan Agri-Business Association