**Elevator Pitch**“Utilities’ overreliance on fossil fuels is harming public health. Pollution from coal and natural gas plants causes asthma, cardiovascular disease, lung cancer, and many other serious health problems. It’s time for our elected leaders to protect our health by encouraging utilities to transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy like wind and solar.”

**Health Impacts**

* Burning fossil fuels emits dangerous levels of toxic substances in our air, including:
  + Particulate Matter
  + Mercury
  + Sulfur Dioxide
  + Arsenic
  + Lead
* **These toxic substances are linked to four of the five leading causes of mortality in the U.S.: heart disease, cancer, stroke, and chronic respiratory diseases, such as asthma.**
* **Michigan’s asthma rate is 10 percent higher than the national average**
* Michigan ranks 5th in the nation in premature deaths, heart attacks and hospital admissions attributed to coal-fired power plant pollution.
* We spend more than $1.5 billion per year on health care costs related to the air quality impacts of coal pollution.
* The pollution from Michigan’s nine oldest coal-fired power plants has been linked to 68,000 cases of asthma attacks and 180 premature deaths each year
* Michigan needs an energy policy that focuses on moving away from burning coal and other toxic substances, and toward cleaner, renewable sources of energy that will reduce illness, rein in health care costs, and save lives.

**PA 341 & 342**

* Michigan made progress in 2016 by passing PA 341 & 342
* PA 341 & 342
  + Increase Michigan’s Renewable Energy Standard to 15% by 2021
  + Kept Michigan’s Energy Efficiency Standard at 1% per year with incentives to increase efficiency above 1.5% per year
  + Created a combined goal of 35% renewables and efficiency by 2025
* **Keeping the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Standards in place are vital to improving the health of Michigan residents by continuing to move Michigan away from the use of coal and dirty energy**
* We must maintain the progress we have made and advance energy policies that increase renewable energy and energy efficiency
  + We can still do better
  + Michigan is not taking advantage of all economically viable energy efficiency
  + Michigan should consider health impacts and costs as a factor in it’s energy planning
  + Michigan is capable of much more energy efficiency and renewable generation, which could eliminate our dependence on coal much faster

**Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency**

* There are safe, clean, renewable energy options that can be used in place of coal-fired power plants.
  + Renewable energy is generated from clean, renewable sources like wind, water and the sun.
  + Energy efficiency means taking simple steps to reduce energy waste.
* Renewable energy and energy efficiency are affordable and cost-effective solutions to energy generated by coal-fired power plants.
* Investment in Michigan’s use of renewable energy will improve overall quality of health, create jobs, spark investment and launch new businesses in our state.
* Transitioning to a system of renewable and efficient energy production would also reduce current state spending on coal-related health issues.
* If Michigan produced just 30% of its energy from renewable sources, it could provide an estimated $4.1 billion in public health benefits cumulatively by 2030 through avoided carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide pollution