



House Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Chairman Nino Vitale
Opponent Testimony / Substitute House Bill 6
Erin Bowser, EDP Renewables North America
Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Good morning Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Erin Bowser and I am the Director of Project Management for EDP Renewables. Today I am testifying in opposition to Substitute House Bill 6.

EDP Renewables is the fourth largest developer, owner and operator of wind in the United States and in the world. Our fleet of operating projects stretches from New York to Texas to Washington State. I was hired by EDP Renewables in 2008, two months after the passage of the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard, to develop and build utility scale wind farm projects in Ohio. At the time the wind industry had been eyeing Ohio for awhile. New wind turbine technology meant that energy generated from Ohio's wind resource could provide energy offtakers, such as utilities, with homegrown power at a fixed rate not subject to market volatility, while also spurring new clean tech innovation, manufacturing and construction jobs, and many other opportunities. At the time, Ohio's leaders, from both sides of the aisle, saw an opportunity for new investment, diversification and economic growth that they could not pass up. They also saw the benefits to Ohio's workforce, businesses, ratepayers and taxpayers.

I think you will agree that my company, and the industry, have delivered. From 2008-2010 EDP Renewables and many other companies swarmed Ohio and invested millions of dollars in permitting efforts, studies, landowner payments and engineering. After a very competitive bid process EDP Renewables entered into a long term contract to sell the power to AEP subsidiary companies, Ohio Power Company and Ohio Southern Power Company, for 20 years at a fixed rate. Construction started on Ohio's first utility scale wind farm in December 2010 and came into service in July of 2011.

Since then we have constructed two additional wind farms. EDP Renewable's Ohio projects total 266 Mega Watts, 138 total wind turbines, in Paulding and Hardin Counties. These three projects were a \$503M capital investment. During construction these projects paid wages to construction workers for 660,094 hours and 425,904 of those hours, 64%, were Ohio domiciled workers. Through 2018 we have paid \$6.4M in property taxes, \$18.7M to private landowners who host or own land near wind farm facilities and in total have spent more than \$93M doing business in some of the most rural counties in the state as well as with Ohio vendors and businesses.

I can testify to the fact that Ohio's leaders commitment to cautiously diversify Ohio's electricity supply was a success, but it could have been a much bigger one. The legislature started backing away from this commitment in 2014 with the freeze to Ohio's Alternative Energy Standard and a dramatic increase in the distance that a wind turbine has to be setback from an adjacent property line.

Companies focus a lot on signals from the market and there is no signal more clear than when a state legislature starts reversing policies that were put in place to encourage and sustain growth in a new sector. But for the policy reversals and reconsiderations, Ohio is a leading state for growth and future investment for EDP Renewables and for renewable energy at large. Ohio's position within the PJM market, its expansive electric grid, and its wind and solar resource make Ohio one of the most attractive markets for companies like ours to produce very competitive longterm prices for power. In the last several years our doors have been knocked down daily by companies like Amazon, Facebook, Microsoft, General Motors, Salesforce, WalMart and many others seeking bids for Ohio projects. They have made commitments to power new infrastructure such as data rooms with renewable energy. These companies are seeking longterm competitive rates for electricity that we can provide. Recently, they still knock, but more often we lament the discouraging barricades for growth being considered in Ohio and move on to focus on other possible projects in Indiana or Illinois. With states like Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, enacting more aggressive policies to move to renewable energy while Ohio perennially debates reversing its own, it won't be long before the clean energy industry abandons Ohio, and our customers here will need to import renewables from out of state. It would be a mistake to reverse course on this market based least cost competitive approach for future investment.

The Alternative Energy Standard is working. It has burgeoned new investment, real steel in the ground and real jobs, without adverse impact. We hope that Ohio's leaders will consider HB6 carefully and not walk away from the AEPS and all of the new investment, new jobs, new opportunities, increased tax revenue and the notion that Ohio can and should diversify its supply of electricity. I feel strongly that EDP Renewables, and the industry, has done what they promised they would do eleven years ago. Now we encourage you to consider building an even bigger future for Ohio by backing the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard and reducing the setbacks for wind turbines to a reasonable and safe standard.

Thank you,

Erin Bowser
Mansfield, OH

Director of Project Management
EDP Renewables North America
erin.bowser@edpr.com