

**Ohio House Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Substitute House Bill 6**

Testimony
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Chairman Vitale, Vice Chairman Kick, and Members of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, my name is Zachary West and I want to thank you for allowing me to testify in support of current Substitute House Bill 6. I would specifically like to express my support for the recently added provision that grants the desperately needed community input with regards to the development of industrial wind and solar projects in Ohio.

I am a third generation resident of Seneca County. After twelve years of pursuing a higher education and training throughout all corners of the great State of Ohio, I am now a licensed physician in the State. Upon my return to my hometown, I was promptly made aware and subsequently became involved with the ongoing issues and concerns surrounding multiple proposed industrial wind projects for the Seneca County region. I mention my background simply because I stand before you now as a member of the next generation and I would not be here today if I did not passionately care about the issues presently before this body.

I commend the efforts by the Ohio General Assembly and its development of legislation that now seeks to invest in our State's clean energy production. As we experience growing concerns about air pollution, it is encouraging to see the development of legislation that aims to invest in Ohio's largest carbon-free, reliable, and highly productive source of clean energy that is nuclear.

Additional sources such as wind and solar continue to mature in their ability to attain the same reliable and productive output as other sources of energy. Nevertheless, some areas of Ohio have already decided to pursue the development of these facilities. As those who presently reside within or near a developed or proposed project have come to discover, wind and solar are not without various issues or concerns.

A most concerning aspect involves the present process in the development of a proposed wind and solar project in Ohio and the noticeable absence of citizen participation. Every community in Ohio faces different circumstances and likewise will develop their own unique set of priorities. Industrial wind and solar facilities dramatically alter the communities in which they are constructed. Some communities have decided the present benefits outweigh the costs and these projects have proceeded to construction with little or no objection even with the current industrial wind turbine setback measurements. Meanwhile, other communities are, by nature of the present process, left largely unaware of any proposed project until it is filed with the Ohio Power Siting Board. If the residents of that community then object to a proposed project, its citizens will quickly discover that neither they nor their local elected officials (Township

Trustees or County Commissioners) have any real recourse to express the people's dissent to a proposed project.

The recently added provision to Substitute House Bill 6 embodies the very principles of a democracy by permitting those most affected by a wind or solar project the opportunity to express their collective cost-benefit analysis of such a proposal for their community. Such a provision is a missing and much needed attribute to the present process as Ohio continues to develop its future energy infrastructure.

Thank You.