

We are writing in support of house bill 401 which allows citizens whose townships are slated for industrial wind turbine facilities to vote whether the facility is compatible with their community.

Critics of the amendment say it isn't fair to have a wind company invest thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of work to then have the project denied by a citizen vote.

But businesses take this kind of risk all the time.

They routinely buy real property and then submit detailed plans to the local zoning board with the expectation of obtaining the required zoning. Sometimes the local board gives their approval; sometimes it does not. No one ever says "Since this business invested so much time and money into this project, let's just skip the local zoning process and let them do whatever they want." Businesses that get a feel for local community acceptance and regulations up front are usually successful in their requests. Those that force themselves into an area where there is widespread regulatory or public opposition are usually not.

The zoning board is the typical local control mechanism for businesses wanting to come into an area. HB 401 would be the only local control mechanism for Ohioans when industrial wind facilities want to come into an area.

To give residents a rightful say about whether they want wind turbines in their township, HB 401 should be supported by all representatives.

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