

# Paulding County Commissioners

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Good Morning Chairman Vitale, Vice-Chairman Kick, Ranking Member Denson – My name is Roy Klopfenstein, a Paulding County Commissioner, land owner and farmer. I am here as an opponent of House Bill 401.

Paulding County is the leader in wind development in Ohio. Our community is home to four operating wind farms, 182 turbines with 380MW of nameplate capacity. Our fifth farm is under construction and will have 31 turbines producing an additional 125 MW. The sixth development, a second phase of our fourth development was started over twelve years ago by local farmers, land owners and businessmen. Little did they realize when they started back in 2007 that their biggest obstacle in getting the project to completion would be legislation coming from Columbus that would continue to change rules, add restrictive setbacks, and now give a local referendum process that could stop twelve years of development, millions of dollars of investment and totally ignore property rights of land owners that started the process.

Ohio has been a leader in many industries over the past century. What is our thought process when we start closing the doors to business opportunities and telling them you're not welcome here in Ohio? We are naive to think that other industries are not taking note of what we are doing to the wind industry. Paulding County borders Indiana, we see chance after chance of business locating across the line for a more favorable business environment. We see our local development being controlled by those here in Columbus that you would think would be supportive, not restrictive.

I could share the economic numbers of what wind development has done for our nineteen thousand residents of Paulding County. These economic drivers in Paulding County are unlikely to be ever duplicated or matched by any other development. We work hard to just maintain workforce for what industry we currently have. Pilot payments too many of our local taxing districts are income that could not have been imagined ten years ago. These numbers have been shared many times, big numbers to us, small numbers to you.

Our developments here in Paulding County have a proven track record, one that our community supports. We already have all the tools we need if our community says enough. Landowners quit leasing ground, and we as commissioners remove the AEZ (alternative energy zone) agreement.

The referendum process in this case is just wrong. We as commissioners receive far more calls on livestock operations than wind farms. Are we as a community going to permit other industries to be subject to a "do I like my neighbor vote"? Will our next convenience store, gas station be subject to a well-organized competitor convincing people to clamor for a referendum process? At the very least why punish those that wish to move their communities forward to additional unwarranted regulations. Does HB 401 include payments to the nineteen different taxing districts in Paulding County that could receive additional revenue? Does HB 401 include lost payments to farmers and land owners that they could otherwise be gained?

Thank you for your time, our hope is Ohio puts out the welcome sign for business. I would be happy to answer any questions.

*Roy Klopfenstein*

Roy Klopfenstein  
Chairman, Paulding County Commissioners