

November 28, 2019  
Representative Nino Vitale, Chair  
Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
The Ohio House of Representatives  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Dear Chairman Vitale

- HB 401 is unprecedented. No other jurisdiction with a statewide power siting process allows for a referendum process at the township level.
- The Ohio Power Siting Board has a built-in process for local input on energy generation projects. PUCO and OPSB Chairman Randazzo recently touted the extent of local engagement available in the Power Siting Board Process. In a recent decision involving Duke's pipeline the PUCO Chairman Sam Randazzo said this:
  - o The board received 1,600 public comments and collected testimony from 115 people.
  - o "All the people who participated in this process at local information hearings as well as public hearings provided valuable input in this process."
- Development of wind farms simply stops if this bill passes. Developers will not spend years and millions of dollars to complete the requirements of the OPSB process and receive a certificate only to have that certificate subject to local referenda. Make no mistake – with the local action at the END of the process – the bill entirely kills wind farm development.
- This bill singles out one source of energy generation for worse treatment than the rest. Other Ohio energy industries, including natural gas, coal and nuclear power do not face these obstacles. Voters do not have a say when it comes to fracking or new pipelines, which directly impacts people's groundwater, land, and safety.
- This bill will allow residents of townships to vote on wind farms. Developments often cover up to six townships or more, which could mean six separate ballot issues for one project.
- HB 401 only allows communities to say "no." It does not allow areas that want wind turbines to reduce current setback requirements so that projects can be built in their areas.
- Ohio already has some of the most restrictive limits on wind projects in the country and it's already discouraging wind energy investment in Ohio. The state has seen only one small wind farm sited in the six years since the state nearly tripled its wind setback.
- This bill takes away landowners' rights. If a farmer wants a wind turbine on his or her land, they should be able to subject to the safety of the neighbors, which is addressed by a reasonable setback. HB 401 would subject the property rights of farmers to the electoral preferences of the neighbors who may live on the other side of a township.

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