

**Testimony of Kevin Hengehold**  
**HB 401**  
**House Energy and Natural Resources Committee**  
**December 3, 2019**

Chairman Vitale, Vice Chairman Kick, Ranking Member Denson and members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Kevin Hengehold and I'm offering testimony in opposition to HB 401.

Although I can understand the proponents' desire for local control, this bill would actually undermine it. Many "economically significant" wind projects span multiple townships. If several townships approve a project and one doesn't, the entire project could be scrapped. In this case, the will of many townships has been subverted by one, undermining the very principle espoused by the bill's proponents

The Power Siting Board is a rigorous process. Intervenors can have their say there. "The OPSB reviews each application for a certificate of environmental compatibility and public need by gathering information from stakeholders and conducting an independent technical review of the likely impacts."<sup>1</sup> Ohio has one of the strictest wind turbine setback laws, with turbines required to be 1,125 feet from the nearest adjacent property line. Rigorous consideration is made of the potential for ice throw, blade shear, and noise pollution. Analysis of shadow flicker, aviation effects, and end-of-life decommissioning are all considered. Moreover, notice is required in local communities before any such project is undertaken. I believe this is a sufficiently adequate review process for wind projects.

Moreover, as far as I can tell, this is discriminatory. No natural gas operation or coal plant would be required to comply with this rule.

This will have a chilling effect on the wind industry, which has produced substantial benefits for Ohio. Ohio is home to over 1,000 wind energy jobs that provide family-sustaining wages and tax revenue for local communities.<sup>2</sup> Property taxes from wind energy can go to fund schools and other essential services. A county in Wisconsin increased its tax revenue by 50% through the implementation of wind energy, and a county in Colorado increased tax revenue by \$2 million from wind energy.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, it has been demonstrated that home values do not decrease near wind turbines. Researchers at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found no statistical evidence that wind turbines had any negative effects on homeowners' property values.<sup>4</sup>

HB 401 is discriminatory, unnecessary, undemocratic, and would decrease the amount of good, tax-paying jobs and industry in our state. For these reasons, please vote no on HB 401.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.opsb.ohio.gov/information/ohio-wind-power-faq/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.e2.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/E2-2019-Clean-Jobs-America.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy04osti/33590.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://emp.lbl.gov/sites/all/files/lbnl-6362e.pdf>