

# SENECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

◆ Holly M. Stacy ◆

House Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation

Chair Dick Stein and Chair Michael O'Brien

Interested Party Testimony on House Bill 6

Testimony of Holly M. Stacy

Commissioner, Seneca County

April 24, 2019

Chair Stein, Chair O'Brien, and Members of the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy Generation: my name is Holly Stacy, and I am a Commissioner for Seneca County, Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today as an interested party to Ohio House Bill 6.

I speak to you today from an economic development perspective, in which I have professional experience: prior to becoming a county commissioner, I served as the CEO/President of the Chamber of Commerce of Sandusky County for 10 years. And I currently serve on the Fostoria Economic Development Corporation Board.

As I have previously written the Speaker, I support an exploration to find a reasonable plan to keep the Davis-Besse plant operational since I, and my fellow commissioners, are proponents of an "all-of-the-above" energy portfolio. We recognize the large jobs impact this plant has on Northwest Ohio, including jobs and economic activity in our county.

But "all of the above" includes energy efficiency and renewable generation, such as wind energy, as well. It's important that H.B. 6, in seeking to help nuclear generation, not harm these other forms of zero emissions power. In its current form, I am concerned it would.

In Seneca County, we look forward to the future development of wind farms: two planned projects (Republic and Seneca) totaling 412-megawatts rural portions of our county, where limited opportunities for economic development exist. This would generate enough energy to power more than 100,000 homes and represents a very large investment in our tax base. It would create hundreds of jobs during construction and infuse millions of dollars into the county.

And during operations, the wind farms would continue to deliver economic value for decades. Family farmers and other landowners would receive lease payments (for example, early \$30 million from one project) that would supplement their income and provide stability to their operations. The community would benefit from sustained tax revenue for local governments and schools and from decades of increased procurement, jobs, and investment involved in maintaining and operating the wind turbines—an estimated \$36 million to schools over 30 years and \$600,000 annually to local government from the Republic Wind project alone. This, in turn,

helps retain families in rural communities by providing diversified revenue streams to the farm and off-farm job opportunities in wind.

I therefore ask that you eliminate any language from House Bill 6 that restricts, disqualifies or in any way presents roadblocks or weakens renewable clean energy development, renewable energy standards or energy efficiency. These provisions would unnecessarily stunt economic and job growth in the Buckeye State.

Furthermore, based on the success of wind farm development in other Ohio communities, I ask you to consider no new energy bill without including the restoration of reasonable wind siting regulations so that developers are no longer hindered by the current, unreasonable setbacks.

Please make renewable clean energy a top priority in any energy policy considered to continue to attract new, highly-trained, highly-paid jobs and billions of dollars in new investment. Ohio needs to encourage, not discourage renewable energy development, especially as access to renewable energy is often a top site selection priority for Fortune 100 and 500 companies.

I appreciate your time and consideration today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

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