

My name is Todd Wolfrum and I am a county commissioner in Van Wert County. I am writing to provide a witness statement in support of the proposed township referendum portion of House Bill 6.

In our county, we currently have an operational wind farm project and several others have been proposed. The constructed project was initiated in a previously established county-wide Alternative Energy Zone. My board revoked the AEZ when it became apparent that it severely limited our ability to negotiate with any future wind companies.

The wind farm issue has been a divisive issue in our county for several years. In the last election for county commissioner, the primary issue was, in fact, wind development. The incumbent, who had taken a strong stance against wind development, received over 70% of the vote.

This is not to say that the county would be opposed to wind development if there was an opportunity to negotiate a better deal with the wind companies. Many who live in the current wind farm feel that they were not adequately compensated for being forced to live in what has essentially become an industrialized area.

If the issue is taken down to the township level, the wind companies would be forced to negotiate with the people who are most directly affected by their activities. It may be that some areas of our county are so set against wind development that there is no deal that could be reached. But that should be the choice of those people and not the choice of the areas of the county who are not affected or of remote state officials.

For these reasons, I am confident that I am speaking for the entire Board of Van Wert County Commissioners in stating that we support the township referendum as proposed in House Bill 6.

Sincerely,

Todd Wolfrum