

Proponent Testimony SB-234
Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Senator Steve Wilson – Chairman

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Williams,

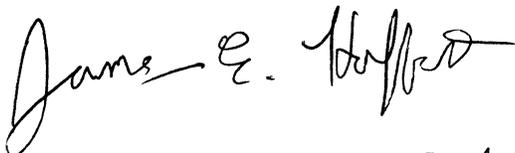
I write today in support of Senate Bill 234.

Setbacks for wind turbines from neighboring property were revised in 2014 by the Ohio Legislature. But since that time a lot has been learned in Ohio regarding what a safe distance really is and it is clear that, even with the revised setbacks, public safety is in jeopardy. Newly released safety manuals are specifying a distance of 3,280 feet (one kilometer) during thunderstorms. Current law is only 1,125 feet and is clearly insufficient.

SB-234 will correct this issue and protect public safety by making sure the turbines are set back a distance that coincides with published safety manuals. With several wind projects currently in the planning stages it is paramount that the Ohio Legislature enact this legislation now.

SB234 will also address a host of concerns held by local residents that are specific to their community by providing the opportunity for a local referendum. This will ensure that all citizens, be they for or against a particular project in their area, will have a true voice by vote in the future of their community. Ohio citizens deserve no less.

Thank you,



7240 S County Rd 43
Bloomville, OH 44818

James E. Hoffert

Proponent Testimony on Senate Bill-234
Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
- Senator Steve Wilson –
Chairman

Senator Wilson and members of the Committee,

SB234 will put important interests of Ohio citizens above those of corporations from outside the state. Regardless of anyone's stance on wind projects everyone should agree that the safety of Ohio citizens is more important than corporate profits. The motives of anyone who disagrees with that statement should be seriously questioned.

Current Ohio policy on siting wind projects does not put public safety as its top priority. By allowing wind turbines to be placed closer than the safety manual recommended 1 kilometer, and closer than the known distances that blade fragments have flown during turbine failures in Ohio, our State's regard for public safety has become terribly inadequate.

SB234 will remedy this situation by specifying setbacks recommended by turbine safety manuals should they be longer than Ohio's current setbacks. This is a no-brainer and should be written into law as soon as possible before any more wind projects are built.

Should setbacks or any other issue of local concern not be addressed to a community liking SB234 will allow for a referendum vote to let local residents decide if they are willing to accept the changes and possible risks to their area in exchange for the income that comes with an industrial wind project. Everyone, both those in favor and those opposed, should have an equal voice. If a major change is favored by the majority of citizens then it will be more easily accepted by the rest of the residents. There is no fairer way to determine the opinion of the area citizens.

I recommend that you support SB234 to protect public safety and to give Ohio citizens the tools they need to move forward with local development while protecting the future of their communities.

Thank you,

*Catherine Feasel
5605 S. Twp Rd 17
Tiffin, OH 44883*

Catherine Feasel

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Proponent Testimony SB-234
Senator Steve Wilson - Chairman

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair Kick, Ranking Member Williams,

My reason for supporting SB234 is that it will address the issue of safe setbacks for wind turbines in Ohio.

For two years I have heard that safe setbacks mentioned by turbine manufacturers are greater than those allowed by Ohio law. But, since no turbine manual has been made available to the public, I have questioned that assertion. Now portions of the safety manual for turbines being used in the Republic Wind project in Seneca County have been released and the recommended setbacks are staggering compared to those Ohio allows to be used in new projects.

Current Ohio law is that turbines must be 1125 feet from the neighbor's property line. But the turbine safety manual says a person should leave the wind farm and wait in a vehicle one kilometer from the nearest turbine. That is 3280 feet or almost 3 TIMES as far as the distance designed into the projects being developed in my area.

With this new information in hand the issue of wind turbine setbacks in Ohio must be lengthened immediately before any new industrial wind projects are allowed to build. SB234 will do just that. But rather than set an exact number it will specify Ohio's current 1125 feet OR the safety manual recommendation, whichever is greater. This will eliminate the need to constantly adjust the setback distance in the law for every new turbine design. Some may be more than 3280 feet, some may be less.

The Ohio Legislature cannot in good conscience allow any new wind project to be built using current setback law. It is of the utmost importance that this issue be dealt with now to protect public safety in Ohio.

Thank you,

Betty Oakleaf
8814 S. State Rt 100
Sycamore, Oh. 44882

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill-234
Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Senator Steve Wilson – Chairman

Senator Wilson and Committee members,

I write in support of Senate Bill 234 for two very important reasons.

1. The wind turbine setbacks written into Ohio law in 2014 are far too close to protect public safety.

Information presented to the Ohio Power Siting Board in Spring of 2019 shows that wind turbine blade fragments, weighing up to six pounds, have traveled hundreds of feet farther than the 1125 feet setback distance allowed by current law.

Also, a recently released case document in the Republic Wind project reveals that the turbine manufacturer advised safety distance from a turbine during a thunderstorm is 1KM or 3280 feet. Current wind turbine setbacks in Ohio are now known to be unsafe and need to be lengthened before any new projects are allowed to build.

2. Wind projects need to have consent of local citizens.

In the past the approval or disapproval of a PILOT tax break by County officials determined whether a wind project proceeded to construction. Recently, for legitimate local concerns, PILOTs have been refused to wind projects in several counties yet the developers proceed regardless. The local control that was given to counties by the Ohio Legislature has become ineffective and must be replaced.

SB234 would give the opportunity of a referendum to communities which may oppose wind development for local reasons. Once on the ballot the true consensus of the areas involved would be determined without the possibility for conflicts of interests which often arise when a few local officials are given the decision.

Ohio has serious issues when it comes to siting wind projects. SB234 would address those problems with long term solutions that will prevent the Legislature from having to deal with these issues again in the near future.

I request your support for SB234. It's time for a lasting fix for wind project issues.

Thank you for your time,

GARY OAKLEAF
8814 So ST ROUTE 100 SYCAMORE, OHIO

Proponent Testimony SB-234

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Chairman - Senator Steve Wilson

Senator Wilson and Members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee,

Thank you for reading my testimony in favor of Senate Bill 234.

Industrial wind projects have become a very divisive issue in my part of Ohio. Everyday some new fact comes to light demonstrating that the two wind developers in the area are not concerned with our community but are instead focused on the process at the Ohio Power Siting Board. The OPSB process determines the priorities that must be addressed with no local concerns getting attention.

We have hundreds of turbine locations being planned that will surround our K-12 school, interfere with three local airports, surround our county parks and nature preserves, and attempt to build these giant machines on the fragile karst formations that underlie our area. The current OPSB process seems unable to deal with these issues adequately as they do not fit into the 'one size fits all' nature of their regulations.

SB234 will address the issue by making sure local citizens can have final say in case the OPSB process does not address their specific issues. Every community is different and the local residents are the only people who know what is important to their area. And remember, it is THEIR community, and their zoning priorities should not be overridden by state law on something like a wind project that is so big it changes the entire community.

Also addressed by SB234 will be the issue of wind turbine setbacks from neighboring properties. Much new information has come public this year, some very recently, which is demonstrating that current setbacks are woefully inadequate to protect public safety.

Please protect the rights of ALL citizens to a voice by vote in the future of their community. Please support SB234.

Respectfully,

Craig Spittler - CRAIG SPITLER
6355 SSK101
Tiffin, OH 44883

Proponent Testimony Senate Bill 234
Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Senator Steve Wilson – Chairman

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Williams,

I write today with deep concerns about the disarray into which wind project siting has fallen in Ohio. As if the issues and priorities of local citizens being overlooked is not bad enough, now it appears that turbine setback distances have been documented to be unsafe as well.

Evidence presented at an Ohio Power Siting Board workshop on turbine blade failures shows conclusively that pieces of turbine blade as heavy as bricks have been thrown hundreds of feet farther than current setbacks. Add to that newly released information that turbine manufacturers are recommending a distance over 1000 feet farther than current setbacks for safety during a thunderstorm and it is obvious that this issue needs to be addressed immediately.

SB234 will address this public safety concern by ensuring turbines are set back a distance that the manufacturer manuals recommend. At the same time, by allowing for a local referendum, it will help guide wind projects to areas where they are desired by local citizens and keep them away from areas where local priorities do not mesh well with a wind project.

I respectfully request that the members of this committee support SB234 to address these areas where current Ohio policy is lacking.



Ken Hetzel

4697 S Twp Rd 151

Tiffin OH 44883

Proponent Testimony Senate Bill 234
Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Senator Steve Wilson – Chairman

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Williams,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB234.

As a resident of Seneca County, OH I have deep concerns about the current Ohio policy being used to locate wind projects in my area.

My biggest concern is with the setback distance for turbines from non-participating property lines. Information recently obtained from a safety manual filed in with the Republic Wind project specifies a 1 kilometer distance from a turbine during a thunderstorm. Yet current setback law is 2,155 feet LESS than a kilometer! This is not right and SB234 will protect public safety by increasing the setback to manufacturer recommendations.

Please realize that as a public official your number one priority is to protect the citizens of Ohio from unnecessary risks. Public safety is more important than the few extra dollars that would come from allowing wind turbines to be placed at unsafe distances.

Please show your respect for the safety of Ohio citizens by supporting SB234.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Urban Feasel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Urban Feasel
4623 S Twp Rd 151
Tiffin OH 44883