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Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Senator Steve Wilson – Chairman

Senator Wilson and Members of the Committee,

As you are well aware the subject of wind energy in Ohio has become contentious with many valid arguments both in favor and opposed to its development. I live in the middle of an area which is in the process of having as many as 6 projects developed and have been approached both by wind companies wanting to lease my land and by neighbors urging me to refrain from transforming the area into an industrial zone.

Even though I could have profited by participating in a project I chose not to do so for one important reason - the process used to locate wind projects in Ohio is too one-sided. A visit to any operating wind project makes it very clear that they completely change the nature of the community in which they are built, from one of agriculture/residential to one of heavy industrial. The machines are huge and numerous and any description other than heavy industrial has to be purposefully misleading for promotional purposes.

There are financial reasons a community may want to accept such a transformation and all the changes that come with it. And there are also many valid reasons they may not. But, as communities, only the residents can truly know what is most important and each local citizen should have an equal and meaningful voice by vote in that decision. The current Ohio policy for siting wind projects gives no weight to a community's individual priorities. This makes the policy unjust at its core since, unlike any other form of energy development, a wind project transforms the entire community and not just small areas.

SB234 will address the fundamental flaw in Ohio's current wind development process by bringing the communities into the mix. Without this adjustment wind development is doomed to political unsustainability in Ohio and all of the benefits it could offer to the areas where local residents confirm it is well suited will be lost.

I urge you to support the passage of SB2334.

Thank you,

Jim Feasel
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