

Opponent Testimony of Darle Baker on Sub. HB 114
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Wednesday, June 20, 2018

Chairman Balderson, Vice Chair Jordan, Ranking Member O'Brien, and Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, thank you for allowing me to share my concerns with you.

My name is Darle Baker. My wife and I have owned and operated farm ground in Van Wert County for over forty years and we live in the proposed Long Prairie Wind project footprint. I come before you in opposition to Sub. HB 114. I have had a private pilot's license since 1975 and also have my Part 137 private aerial agricultural application endorsement. I have also established a private runway on our home property which was installed many years ago so I can easily assess any issues on my farm fields. Every time I fly I have to be aware of any unlit meteorological towers that BP or now Apex has installed. When I first learned of the possibility of the Long Prairie project being established in the southern part of Van Wert County where we live, I made phone calls to the Ohio Department of Transportation and the FAA. I was told my long established private runway has no protection from the building of a turbine on the neighboring property adjacent to the end of this runway.

Keeping the setback law where it is now is less of a hazard but it also provides very little protection for safe aviation operations. Aviation safety must not be sacrificed for the sake of wind development. The same setbacks for public airports should be extended to private airports as these are used for general aviation emergencies. In fact our home is on the direct life flight path from the Indianapolis hospitals to the local Van Wert County Health Center. It is fairly often that we will hear the low flying helicopter as it is rapidly approaching the hospital.

With wind turbines being proposed now at the 660' height or even greater as compared to the 476' turbines of the Blue Creek project shouldn't we consider the lengthening of setback footage for everyone's safety and not shortening it?

I highly recommend the an amendment to this bill to give citizens who live in the affected footprint the choice of whether they want their lives changed by wind turbines or not and whether the setbacks address our local needs. It's our life and our homes and our farms that will be affected. Not those of this legislature.

Thank you for your time.
Darle Baker