Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee,

I live near Bellevue in the proposed Emerson Creek Wind Farm and I oppose House Bill 6. As a farmer, my property rights are critical to my livelihood. I rely on my land to provide a living for myself and my family. When I was approached by a wind farm developer years ago, I chose to participate in the project because I see it as a use that fits in perfectly with my farming, no different than adding a hog barn to my property. Similarly, over 300 other landowners in Huron and Erie Counties have chosen to participate in the project. House Bill 6 creates a referendum process on permitted wind energy projects. This is no different than creating a referendum process on hog barns, on radio towers, on pipelines, on what crops I’m going to plant, or on what color my house is. How I choose to use my land in a permissible way is my choice, and taking away that choice from me and giving it to my township strips away my ownership of my property.

Why would any business choose to invest in Ohio with this precedent set? And where would the state be if this referendum process had always existed? I can’t imagine a business seeking to develop a new cell phone tower, a new coal plant, a new nuclear plant, or a new pipeline will look at this type of legislation and see Ohio as a business-friendly state. I can’t imagine ever building the nuclear and coal plants that now are seeking this bail out if a referendum process such as this had existed. This referendum language creates a dangerous precedent not only for farmers and our property rights, but for the future of business investment in the state of Ohio.

If we are seeking to live in a free market system, then the legislature should not pick winners and losers. Please vote against this bill and the included wind referendum language.

Sincerely,

Kevin Erf