

**Senate Committee on Energy and Public Utilities**  
**Sub. HB 6**  
**TESTIMONY**

Jim Feasel  
Tiffin, Ohio 44883  
June 19, 2019

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Committee, I am here to provide support to Sub. House Bill 6 and specifically the provision on giving affected area citizens a voice in the development of wind projects.

The proposed Seneca Wind project in Seneca County Ohio will place turbines within one half mile of my property, which lies inside the project boundaries. The project will bring major changes to my area should it be built. Yet even though I am in the middle of it I have little if any say in the matter.

I was approached by the developers to lease my property since it is situated such that four turbines could be built on it. But, as a family, we decided it was not something we wanted to do, regardless of the income it would provide. Some of my neighbors, however, chose to participate and turbines are on the plans for their properties.

For the last year I have thought that the idea of a wind farm in our area was not the best idea. However, if my neighbors and the majority of others who must live close to or inside the project were to decide by a free and open vote that they wanted the project to proceed I would have a much easier time accepting it, and I have no doubt that other dissenting residents would as well.

But as it is now the community feels pressured by many outside influences that seem bent on forcing their will upon us. For me, their will does not feel like the consensus opinion of our area. I acknowledge that I could be wrong about that, but the only way to know for sure is to give people the opportunity to vote on it. There is no other method that can truly reflect the local consensus view.

If the wind industry is to have a prosperous future then we have to find a way that allows the people who must live with the projects feel as if they are a part of the decision. Currently there are far too many outside forces bringing pressure to bear, which leaves the community feeling steamrolled. The fact that they have no direct say raises their defenses to very high levels and serves only to turn public opinion against such projects.

Some areas of Ohio are a good fit for wind projects and the economic development will be welcomed. Some areas are not a good fit for many good reasons, including

population per square mile and other demographics. Some may be better suited to solar. But the only people who know the correct answer to that are those who make it their home. If they are allowed to make the decision as a local community then the project has a much better chance of being accepted over the many decades it will be in service.

Letting the people know they will be part of the decision will make the building of wind projects much less contentious and serve to keep public opinion from turning against wind energy as a whole. This would help insure that projects get built where they are a good fit and not forced into areas where they are not. The future of wind energy in Ohio would benefit from such an arrangement.

Thank you.