

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: March 23, 2021

Name: Steven Crum

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Position/Title: International Representative

Address: 46242 O.R. and W. Tunnel Rd.

City: Caldwell State: OH Zip: 43724

Best Contact Telephone: 740-630-4449 Email: Steve_Crum@IBEW.org

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): House Bill 118

Specific Issue: Opposed to local control of energy policy

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

Will your testimony be written, spoken, or both? Both

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

We are opposed to giving local townships final control over decisions on allowing solar projects to proceed.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD OF
ELECTRICAL WORKERS
FOURTH DISTRICT**



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International President

KENNETH W. COOPER
International Secretary-Treasurer

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*International Vice President
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**Testimony of Steven Crum
Resident of Ohio House District 95
International Representative, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Before the Committee on Public Utilities
March 23, 2021**

Good morning Chair Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, and Ranking Member Smith, and members of the House Public Utilities Committee. Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony today.

I am a life-long Ohio resident and a nearly 40-year member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the IBEW. The IBEW is the largest energy union in the world, representing over 775,000 active members and retirees across the United States, United States' territories, and Canada. I have worked thousands of hours throughout Ohio and neighboring states in the electrical trade.

I am testifying today in opposition of House Bill 118. As written, House Bill 118, would have a negative impact on job creation in Ohio as a deterrent for energy generation projects within our state. The state of Ohio already has a very robust Ohio Power Siting Board process, with ample opportunity for participation, a process in which experts are decision makers. In addition to the effective state Power Siting Board process, Ohio also has a unique program that makes Ohio desirable for development. Ohio's PILOT program incentivizes job creation for Ohio residents by offering beneficial property tax treatment to developers in exchange for commitments that are beneficial for Ohio residents. The requirement I would like to discuss today is that 80% of individuals employed on a solar project must be Ohio residents.

The majority of solar projects in the pre-application or pending phases are located in rural Ohio. These communities were hardest hit by the recession ten years ago and were among the hardest hit during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to unemployment, underemployment is prevalent throughout rural Ohio.¹ Solar development in these areas has the potential to not only generate revenue within the community that can be used to support critical services and infrastructure, but from the IBEW's perspective, solar development can create a pathway to a career in the electrical industry. These areas need the jobs that solar development stands to create.

¹ <https://www.epi.org/blog/ohios-economy-no-longer-fully-recovers-after-recessions/>

A 2020 study by Ohio University² on the economic impacts of utility-scale solar within our state found that nearly 55,000 jobs could be created in Ohio during the construction phase of solar projects alone. The same study found that for every direct job created by these projects, one job would be created state-wide. The IBEW is excited about these opportunities. The IBEW stands ready to partner with developers, contractors, state and community-based organizations, and all interested parties to focus on workforce recruitment and development.

The IBEW represents over 20,000 workers in Ohio. These Ohio residents are trained, highly-skilled and their jobs are family-sustaining, community-supporting, lifelong jobs – they are careers with room for advancement. I stand before you today as someone who has made a living, supported my family, given back to my community, and when the time comes, I will be able to retire comfortably as a result of jobs like the ones House Bill 118 stands to negatively impact.

I urge you to support Ohio jobs by opposing House Bill 118. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. The IBEW looks forward to continuing its work throughout the state in support of energy jobs for Ohio residents.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven Crum
46242 OR and W Tunnel Road
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² Michaud, G., Khalaf, C., Zimmer, M., & Jenkins, D. (2020). *Measuring the economic impacts of utility-scale solar in Ohio*. Developed for the Utility Scale Solar Energy Coalition of Ohio (USSEC).