

Opponent Testimony of House Bill 118
Chet Straley
Real Estate Broker
Van Wert, Ohio
House Public Utilities Committee
March 23, 2021

Dear Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony as an opponent for House Bill 118. My name is Chet Straley, and I am a broker and auctioneer with one of the top producing real estate and auction firms in Van Wert and Paulding, Ohio. I would like to request this committee oppose House Bill 118 that creates unnecessary and overly-regulated roadblocks for renewable energy development in the state.

Every day, I see clean energy at work in Van Wert and Paulding counties, producing electricity and generating income for our landowners, schools, county governments and community organizations including our county libraries, emergency services, townships and senior citizen centers.

What I bring to you today is actually common-sense, first-hand, actual experience as one of the top brokers in the heart of northwest Ohio.

Overall, farmland in our region has seen the largest increase in value due to wind farm development. Each turbine means additional, guaranteed cash flow for the landowner every year for dozens of years. My real estate firm has sold farms and properties that have turbines on them, and those properties have demonstrated increased value.

Additionally, we have seen no decrease in residential value when a turbine is nearby. In fact, we've seen the opposite with residential properties located near a wind farm with good neighbor agreements. These properties are often desirable because they have a guaranteed annual payment of up to \$2,000 or more. This is like bonus money each year that the homeowner can choose to put towards home improvement projects, offset or pay their property taxes in full or whatever they choose.

Now, we have the opportunity to welcome utility-scale solar as well to our communities if bills like HB 118 are not permitted to move forward. 2020 hit Northwest Ohio hard with little to no economic development opportunities for our rural areas. Renewable energy... is our opportunity. An opportunity to bring new jobs to our area; an opportunity to better fund our schools, build up our tax base and help our farmers earn additional income for their farming operations.

In closing, I ask this committee to not support legislation that will hurt northwest Ohio's chance at bringing in new opportunity and clean energy investment by opposing House Bill 118.

Thank you for your consideration and for this opportunity to submit this testimony.

Chet Straley
Van Wert, OH