

SB 52 / HB 118

I am a farmer in Hartford Township, Licking County, Ohio. I grew up on our family farm and spent most of my time helping my Dad, and then taking on the responsibilities of our enterprise as Dad slowed down. I am a third generation farm owner. My wife and I did not inherit our farm ground. We have carried mortgages, paid taxes, lived through some lean years, and helped build a business. We have supported employees and their families. I am now 72 years old. I want to see my farm stay in farm ground.

We have signed contracts with a solar company, Open Road, that will assure the ground will stay farm ground for 30 or 40 years. We have raised corn, seed corn, soybeans, wheat and barley. None of these crops can harvest the sun's energy as efficiently as solar panels. We have always tried to be good neighbors. I feel that as a property owner we should have the right to farm or rent our ground the way we want to. We have always had a choice on what crops we planted and been good stewards of the land.

Solar farming is probably the best way to harvest the sun's energy. Neighbors in our area have been very positive. Solar farming ensures that my farm ground can stay in the family for at least 30 years. We are proud to commit a portion of our farm land to solar farming. Our children, our children's children and even our great grandchildren will all benefit, with money for college education and welfare. Dad gave his great grandchildren farm ground. The income from solar farming will provide college education funding for 18 and possibly more of his great grandchildren. By committing a portion of a family farm to solar farming, it could enable a farm family to continue to farm crops in a traditional way. I hope that our community will realize that this solar project will provide new and clean energy for our current and future generations.

Senate Bill 52 / House Bill 118 takes away my right and my family's rights as property owners for over 70 years in Hartford Township. I feel I have the right to make a living from the ground I own and pay property tax on.

The solar project in Hartford Township will give the local school district funding it desperately needs, the township will have funding for better roads that will be well maintained in the future, and a better funded fire department. All of these things are beneficial to the local community!

Some people may not understand how good the project will be for areas surrounding the city of Columbus. If the coal burning plant in Conesville, Ohio is closed down, Columbus will need electricity from somewhere else. *Why not provide some "Ohio grown" energy, stored and transmitted from Ohio solar fields to help provide that energy need?* Many acres of prime farmland are being developed for homes and businesses that will all need electricity.

Solar panels supply clean energy. *There will be less housing development, and less traffic if solar farming is allowed. Planting of shrubs and trees are planned to help beautify the area surrounding the solar panels. This company is taking care to avoid placing panels next to or directly across the road from homes.*

Senate Bill 52 / House Bill 118 is a bad idea!!! To make it retroactive is even worse. *Companies have spent millions in developing plans for solar projects in Ohio. Now all these plans would be jeopardized. If Senate Bill 52 / House Bill 118 becomes law, what precedent is set for neighbors to take action against farmers because they aren't happy with farming practices? Should the state be able to come in and take farmers' rights away to grow and harvest crops that provide them with a living? Or for farmers to rent their ground for a purpose that is beneficial to their own community or an even larger area?*

If you were in my position, you would not like it either!

I have voted Republican all my life, but once in a while Democrats have a good idea. Our country needs to produce solar energy. It is certainly a better option than nuclear plants! I am not sure what the solution is. But **Senate Bill 52 / House Bill 118 as it stands is not it!!**

Please go back and design a bill that is fair to land owners and their neighbors, as well as the solar projects already started.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James E. Clever".

James E Clever