

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

Sub. SB 52

Brock Whetstone (Auglaize County)

May 19, 2021

Chairman McColley, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Committee. My name is Brock Whetstone and I reside in Auglaize County. I support Sub. Senate Bill 52 and would like to share my reasons why I support the passage of this bill.

I Brock A. Whetstone resides in Union Township in Auglaize County. Our home is in an affected outlined area one of several proposed wind/solar in Auglaize County.

I support this bill as it will return back to Ohio Townships, the right to manage the land use in a manner that is desired by the majority of its residents. These proposed bills provide a reasonable and fair process for renewable energy developers' ability to identify which parts of Ohio are willing to welcome such investment into their community. I call on you to support and assist with the immediate passage of these two bills.

I support this legislation for the following reasons:

Multiple states throughout the United States have some form of local control for the governance of industrial wind/solar developments.

Current law, as well as the application process at the OPSB, does not adequately (if at all) consider the concerns of a community that is impacted by wind/solar developments. Only the concerns of adjacent/abutting property owners have the opportunity to intervene and only if they can afford legal representation able to do so. Thus giving wind/solar developers an unfair advantage in the process as many have full-time legal staff within their organization. The costs for abutting residents wishing to intervene can cost tens of thousands of dollars.

The public interest, convenience and necessity of such projects should first take into account the public immediately surrounding such developments and who can be adversely affected by such developments. It is the opinion of these Ohioans that should carry significant weight in the wind/solar application process as they know best how such a development might impact their community as a whole. Not ambiguous/vague criteria currently utilized and twisted by developers for corporate gain and only considered/judged by unelected staff unfamiliar with the area. (To be exact, eight determining criteria (as defined by the Ohio Power Siting Board) of which only seven apply to wind/solar.)

I am asking you to fully support the passage of these bills as well.

Sincerely

Brock A. Whetstone
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