

Opponent Testimony, Karen Deibel, Ohio resident

Senate Bill 181

Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

June 17, 2025

My name is Karen Deibel. I live in Greene County. I am opposed to SB 181. It makes no sense to make it easier to conduct underground and surface mining. All I have to do is go down Hyde Road and turn on Dayton Yellow Springs Road to go to the grocery store to see continuous truck traffic and huge deep, wide holes of dust and destruction on what used to be precious farmland. It is not unusual to be at the intersection of Rt 235 and Dayton Yellow Springs Road with tanker trucks and other heavy duty trucks in at least 3 directions from Fairborn Cement Company, a subsidiary of Eagle Materials, Inc. based out of Dallas, Texas. Seems to me, by looking around where I live, it is currently plenty easy to mine.

There is a lot of mining activity in Ohio. Is that what we want for the future of our state? People will not want to live here! We need to do things differently. Not more of the same unsustainable practices. These times require us to seek more creative and sustainable practices. For example, "A growing number of studies say that roads containing waste plastic have the potential to perform as well or better than traditional roads. They can last longer, are stronger and more durable in respect to loads and rutting, can tolerate wide temperature swings, and are more resistant to water damage, cracking, and potholes." (Article written by Ann Parson, published at the Yale School of the Environment, 2021) It's time to think outside the box! Our future depends on it.

The mining industry complains they cannot acquire adequate land or zoning to do business. That is the case because a lot of people live in our state! It makes no sense to continue or even accelerate the same old mining practices. Ohio has rich water resources and prime agricultural land that make it a desirable place to live. It makes no sense to aggressively destroy that.

It makes no sense to mine in a residential area. Mining companies can make a huge profit. I imagine it to be more money than anybody ever needs. Some of the homeowners unfortunate enough to be located next to an industrial mining operation have very little. Their home and property may be all they have. A mining company may have the power to "steal" their only asset.

It makes no sense to have a mining permit that lasts forever. It makes no sense to eliminate the accountability that should be in place for an operator to renew a permit. Many things change over time. It makes no sense to automatically allow for the expansion of mining areas within the same township. It makes no sense to permit underground mining automatically in an area

permitted for surface mining. Surface mining and underground mining probably have different issues. It makes no sense to assume mining companies will operate in good faith. And possibly most importantly, it makes no sense to exclude the role of local government and its residents. They are the people familiar with the land use, local issues, conditions, and community identity. It makes no sense to render powerless Ohio residents impacted by a mining operation. That is just wrong!

It makes no sense to create legislation that excludes input from experts outside the mining industry and permitting agency. Environmental concerns are best addressed by environmental experts, independent scientists, and local scholars.

If ODNR Division of Resource Management has inadequate staff to process an application in a meaningful and timely way, then there needs to be money in the budget that would expand the department. Otherwise, fewer applications will be adequately addressed. It makes no sense to solve that problem by reducing the requirements and simply make it a less demanding process to gain a mining permit. Mining operations are industrial operations with massive intended and unintended consequences.

Mining needs to be strictly regulated and carefully monitored. Alternative sources of building and construction materials need increased attention and investment. Anything less is irresponsible, dangerous, and unacceptable.