

**Proponent Testimony on Substitute House Bill 49**  
**By Connie Moser, Secretary/Treasurer, Harvest the Wind**  
**Ohio Senate Finance Committee**  
**June 6, 2017**

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Skindell, and Members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee, thank you for your time today.

In 1959, my father started our family farm. My husband, took over the farm when he passed away and we will pass the farm on to our children. My name is Connie Moser. I am a graduate of The Ohio State University and a retired Special Education teacher from Convoy, Crestview. I am a mother, a grandmother, and as a lifelong resident of Van Wert County, I have seen a lot of change in my lifetime. One of the toughest changes I've seen - the disappearance of small farms.

Many people don't understand farming. Children grow up loving tractors and many adults believe farmers are rich and have it made. In reality, farming is hard work. You are at the mercy of Mother Nature, the markets, and whatever design God may throw at you in any given year. I watched my father adapt to power poles, US 30 taking 50 acres of our farm, and to 2 acre lots of farmland being sold off to build new homes bringing an entirely different lifestyle to the country. Small family farms don't cash flow, believe me, the bank owns a lot and urban sprawl continues to reduce acreage. To some, the preservation of farmland might seem like an unnecessary concern. However, as population and food demand continues to increase, landowners in the county seriously need to consider how to maintain their farms into the future.

In Van Wert County we have a wind farm. Our family lives and farms in Blue Creek Wind Farm. Almost 300 leases were signed to build Blue Creek. Another 100 leases represent a second project waiting to build in the north side of the county, and the first project for the southside of the county holds close to another 300 leases. These farmers and landowners have realized the necessity of maintaining farmland. But, if you've noticed, it's hard for farmers to get down here to testify. It is planting season and we've had a wet year so far with over 7" of rain last week. Also, Farmers don't unionize, they aren't your angry mob. Farmers adapt and adjust. Harvest the Wind was created in Van Wert County because of that, it was established to provide support to these agricultural landowners and knowledge to our citizens. We believe it is the right of every landowner to decide how to sustain the productivity of his land. Unfortunately, the same way people misunderstand farmers, they miss the benefits wind brings to the entire community.

If a wind turbine is placed on farmland, it remains compatible with the land still being farmed. For each turbine lease, less than one acre is taken from production, which provides the landowner a means to reap maximum yield from that ground while benefitting the community. Farmers are willing to lease their ground, something many of them and their families have worked their entire life to build to a business that will bring investment and jobs, to the

community and the state effecting schools, libraries, infrastructure, etc. as well as a new renewable energy source to the world.

You've heard from many who want to say the setback distance for wind turbines needs to be greater. This takes away a farmer's right to choose. If the business no longer wants to come to Ohio because the land is no longer suitable for their investment, this takes away an opportunity for your landowners. Shouldn't everyone have the right to choose if they are okay leasing their ground or not? Instead, people want to take rights away by having the government enforce more strict regulation? Why?

If folks don't like the way they look, can't see the benefit to the community, the necessity to the farmer, and understand the bigger picture solution wind energy provides, they don't have to sign up to be a part of the project and they also shouldn't be making the decision for the entire community or state. In fact, I'd suggest they not purchase a two acre lot that takes more farmland out of production and changes the purpose of the country. Farmland can remain farmland when it has a new crop that can be planted one time and harvested forever. Simultaneously, it allows towns and cities to prosper from a major investment while permitting farmers to continue the job they've always done; serving as caretakers of the earth and providing for the world.

Please allow the farmers of Ohio the right to participate in this opportunity. Failing to correct the current setbacks will take that right away. Thank you for your time and consideration.