

Kevin Sheen  
Interested Party Testimony House Bill 49  
Senate Finance Committee  
Chairman Scott Oelslager  
June 6, 2017

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Manning, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as an interested party to House Bill 49. My name is Kevin Sheen and I'm Senior Director of Government and Public Affairs for EverPower Wind Holdings.

I am here today to respectfully request that House Bill 49 be amended to return the property line wind turbine setback to its original distance of 1.1 times the height of a turbine from base to vertical blade tip.

Senate Bill 221 established Ohio's Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard In 2008, Shortly after the passage, the Legislature choose to permit all wind farms through the Ohio Power Siting Board because Ohio had no guidelines for siting wind farms. After rigorous thought and study, the OPSB established setbacks which were established in House Bill 487 in May 2008 based on industry norms and standard practices in other jurisdictions.

In HB 487, the state established two setbacks: one from a property line and one from a habitable structure. The property line setback was 1.1 times the height of the turbine from its base to vertical blade tip (approximately 540 feet). The habitable structure setback was 750 feet plus blade length (approximately 925 feet). The habitable structure setback was increased in May 2012 to 1125 plus blade length, or approximately 1300 feet. It is important to note that these are statutory minimums, and that the Ohio Power Siting Board has the ability to increase them on a turbine by turbine basis for any given project.

As a wind farm developer we make large investments – as much as \$5 Million per project - to permit and engineer a wind farm. Consistent policy is necessary for us to complete these developments and deliver on the promises that we make to the landowners, tax payers, municipalities and Ohio businesses that will benefit from a wind farm development within the state. These commitments have been extremely difficult to make as the rules for developing a wind farm continue to change – seemingly at the whim of those small number of legislators that would like to impose their views on wind farms across the state.

The setback change that was made in HB 483 – an MBR Bill that was hurriedly rushed for a vote without the opportunity for public comment – has left many rural Ohioans endlessly waiting for their economic lifeline in the form of capital investment, land payments and tax payments.

Wind farms in neighboring states of Indiana, Ohio and New York operate peacefully within communities throughout those states providing income to farmers, schools and municipalities that desperately need additional forms of income.

Wind turbine technician is the fastest growing job in the US and these jobs provide a living wage to rural areas that have not seen considerable job growth in a number of years. Ohio manufacturers are poised to take advantage of this growth as well as suppliers to new wind farms. For example, my company has made a commitment to purchase our FAA lighting from a local firm at a cost of \$200,000 and this is just one of the many commitments that the wind industry in Ohio will make to local businesses.

Decisions about the siting of wind turbines have not been taken lightly. The OPSB has one of the nation's most rigorous siting processes and the legislature should return the setbacks to those that were established as a result of considerable thought and science. Billions of dollars in investment shouldn't be jeopardized because a few people in the legislature have taken it upon themselves to create a solution for which there was no problem.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.