

TESTIMONY OF JOHN MILLER, P.E.
Champaign County
IN OPPOSITION TO SC3504
Amendment to Revise Setbacks from Industrial Wind Turbines

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Skindell and members of the Committee, I am here to speak against any revision of the setbacks for industrial wind turbines that would measure the distance from my home rather than my property line. I also object to any reduction in the 1,125-foot setback.

I am a civil engineer and the owner of Miller Engineering of Urbana, Ohio. I provide structural and civil engineering services throughout the Midwest. In that regard, I have numerous opportunities to travel through Indiana and view the landscape littered with hundreds of turbines. One thing that stands out to me is that this landscape has big – really big – farms that don't look anything like what we have in Champaign County. Wind farms such as I see in Indiana would render Champaign County uninhabitable.

But I think that is what the Hite Amendment seeks to do. It seeks to provide a means for developers to build large wind farms in small communities. Due to their massive scale, they would overwhelm everything around them. I believe they impact the landscape from a distance of thirty miles – that's how far away I can see them. To think of living within a mile of one is not appealing to me and I suspect it is not appealing to anyone.

Not every place is appropriate for the placement of industrial wind turbines. But this Amendment runs roughshod over the public and enables developers to jam turbines into areas that are absolutely wrong. What kind of a future does a community have after it is overwhelmed by a fleet of 250 ton towers reaching to heights of over 500 feet? That community has no future.

This proposed reduction in the setbacks does not serve my interest and it doesn't serve the interests of my community. No one in their right mind would want to live within the footprint of a wind farm.