

TESTIMONY OF TERRY RITTENHOUSE
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 am a small businessman operating my company out of my home in Union Township.

I find difficult to accept that the wind industry justifies seizing my land and destroying my family's largest asset on the basis of local economic development. All they talk about is theoretical jobs and investment. Wouldn't it be more compelling to argue that Ohio is in desperate need of electricity? They can't use that argument because there is no market and absent subsidies, wind power is neither economically viable nor sustainable.

I wish to focus my remarks on the economic model that the wind industry is waving around to justify ruining the lives of countless rural families and jeopardizing the tax base of communities. It is called the JEDI model and it is liberally referenced in the report called Blowing in the Wind – Ohio's Overly Restrictive Wind Setback Law is Putting Billions in New In-State Investment at Risk by A Renewable America. JEDI stands for the National Renewable Energy Laboratories' Jobs and Economic Development Impact model.

First, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) warns that the model reflects gross impacts and not net impacts. NREL also cautions that local economic development losses can be sustained from the displacement of some other type of economic activity. I suspect they inhibit future economic development as residents who do not desire to live under the turbines move away and take their small businesses with them. I might be one of those businesses.

During consideration of the Buckeye Wind project, the staff of the OPSB refused to provide for questioning the staff member who accepted uncritically the developer's claim of socioeconomic benefits using JEDI. OPSB even opposed a subpoena requested by Champaign County and the affected townships when they tried to get some meaningful economic information about the project.

Later, it was discovered why the OPSB was reluctant. They typically accept whatever the developer gives to them and they conduct no independent analysis. OPSB testified they could not afford the software to test the JEDI model inputs. I think it is safe to say *even today* that the OPSB does not know what the inputs for the JEDI model are. Yet, rather than limiting the use of JEDI to its intended function as a preliminary screening tool, the Board relies on JEDI to justify its decisions to issue certificates that adversely impact residents living across large geographic areas. And now AWEA uses JEDI to fool you into thinking there is no downside to industrial wind development.

In using JEDI for the proposed project in Champaign County, the model defines "local" as a seven-county area. The model assumes all landowners with leases actually live in the area when many do not even live in Ohio. The model assumes construction workers are local when experience from the Van Wert-Paulding area tells us the workers come from out of state as part of a skilled team. The model ignores the devaluation of land and consequent loss of revenue for local government.

In short, no one, including OPSB evaluates the **net economic impact** of wind projects. I maintain the socioeconomic losses exceed the benefits. You cannot truthfully and ethically justify seizing my land on the basis of unfounded claims of economic development.