



*Working together for Ohio farmers to advance
agriculture and strengthen our communities.*

June 24, 2021

The Honorable Jason Stephens
Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Chair
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chair Stephens,

Ohio Farm Bureau Federation is the largest general farm organization in the State of Ohio, representing many farmers and landowners across the state. As such, we have a continuing interest in a variety of oil and gas issues. We also have a substantial amount of member-developed policy on a number of energy issues, which serves as the basis of our position as an interested party to House Bill 152.

House Bill 152 addresses the important issue of unitization in Ohio. Many landowners understand unitization is a needed tool to ensure we can tap into our valuable energy resources. With that in mind, we support the concept of establishing a more definitive timeframe for regulators' consideration of these proposals. At the same time, we believe it is critical that landowners be fully informed of how their land will be affected.

We appreciate the new requirements for public notice and would ask ODNR to ensure landowners have received notice of the filing and are able to participate prior to scheduling a hearing. Farm Bureau policy calls for proper notification procedures to ensure landowners have a full understanding of the unitization proposal and processes that will take place when their land is included in a drilling unit. As such, we question whether a remote or teleconference hearing qualifies as proper procedure for a unitization proposal. Many landowners lack broadband connectivity in these areas, which would impede their ability to participate. We also believe any interested party should be able to request a hearing, not just the applicant.

Farm Bureau promotes responsible citizenship and encourages all its members to obtain legal counsel and aggressively negotiate with developers. We encourage the addition of language requiring both the producer and land/mineral rights owner to show good faith efforts to negotiate at the public hearing before a decision approving forced unitization is made.

Thank you for considering Farm Bureau's perspective as the legislature considers House Bill 152. Please do not hesitate to contact me if we can provide additional insight or answer any question you may have about our position.



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Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenna J. Reese". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jenna Reese
Director of State Policy
Ohio Farm Bureau Federation