

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

HB 118 SB52
(ANN FISHER)
(3/7/2021)

My name is (ANN FISHER) and I reside in (AUGLAIZE COUNTY) and am also a current board member of Against Birch Solar a grassroots group formed to become well educated on this topic. I am in support of HB118 and SB52.

My husband and I have lived in Ohio our entire lives and at our residence 11678 Zerkle Rd. Cridersville, Ohio for 34 years and were looking forward to our golden years in the bucolic setting we have built. From a small 800 square foot house to a beautiful 2,400 square foot home with a beautiful outbuilding and wooded acreage that we have landscaped and beautified. We raised two adult children who were looking forward for their children to enjoy our homestead as well. We understood that there were possibilities over the years that things could be built on farmland that might block our bucolic view or be annoying. This isn't just an annoyance, a housing development, a pole barn, a chicken coop, a pig farm, or in our case actually the leasing landowner himself has let his own farmhouse become a vacant dump next door. This isn't just a "not in my backyard" issue. This isn't just about us. This is about the effect of 1,000s to 10,000s of acres turned into **Industrial Scale Solar/Wind Power Plants** that is impacting thousands of residents without a local voice.

We are indeed just 1 of the 1000s of affected residents in and near the [Birch Solar 1 LLC 20-1605-EL-BGN](#) perimeter in a ½ mile radius being proposed in Shawnee Township Allen County and Logan Township Auglaize County. **Birch Solar 1 LLC** is 2,600 acres of leased land 40+ miles of fencing in 2,300 acres with 1,400 acres of 650,000+ glass aluminum cadmium lead solar panels surrounding some residences on all 4 sides within only 300 feet from the CENTER OF THE HOMES NOT FROM THE PROPERTY LINE. THIS IS NOT A FARM. And yes, just as in Hardin 1, this is **Birch Solar 1**. With more to come? We live on 2 acres with panels within 100 feet, some instances 50 feet from our property lines with 22+ miles of access roadways, 95 inverters the size of trucks, and a laundry list of other issues that will come with that just feet away from our property lines. It's not a bucolic setting of pretty panels, sheep, and biodiversity as the developers try to advertise. Details can be reviewed at [birch-solar-permit-1](#) , [birch-solar-permit-2](#), [birch-solar-permit-3](#)

Of all the **Industrial Scale Solar/Wind Power Plants** that are infringing on the rights of townships, there are indeed a few townships that welcome these industrial power plants. Mostly for the reasons that the townships are not an outlier as **Birch Solar 1** is within a population so dense or that township is not concerned in preserving its natural heritage. Those townships can welcome the solar/wind and vote accordingly. Our townships do not want this. Logan and Shawnee which has a [Shawnee-Township-Comprehensive-Plan](#) stating such. Our township trustees have written resolutions against this.

Birch Solar 1 LLC is a prime example of an outlier where it is being placed in highly populated townships with many existing waterways, floodplains, gas wells and gas pipelines to intensify the danger of its placement. Below is a picture where there are MANY residents completely engulfed – there are no placements such as this in Ohio. Only putting panels 300 feet from the CENTER OF THEIR HOMES NOT FROM THEIR PROPERTY LINE.

Cases in point. I implore you to understand there are quite a number of Kyle and Allyshia Kuhbender stories - a young 30+ couple with a 2 year old. They purchased their "dream" home two years ago. They even asked the farmer who leased the land surrounding them if he planned to develop. He said no – which it was in his trust not to develop. And so Kyle bought his 7 acre "dream" home to raise their 2 year old son. And to have 7 acres of his own to hunt – now to be SURROUNDED ON ALL 4 SIDES by 6 foot high fenced acres around 10 foot high solar glass coverage – nor shall he be able to hunt his own acreage, but more importantly the safety of his family is at question for so very many reasons. The Rostorfers, another 30+ couple with a similar story surrounded on 3 sides and an access road 150 feet from their driveway that could be a danger to their 2 year old playing in the yard. In my research I have heard a myriad of stories just like this.

I don't think any of us are against the research for a cleaner better earth and for the benefit of the economics for Ohio. However, it CANNOT be at the dire detriment of its Ohioans. And if I read one more headline that says that we are ANTI-SOLAR or NIMBY – I'm going to scream. Never in a million years, did I think I would be in the middle of Climate Wars and public policy. Understand that days into our notification well into a year of it already being planned, we already had 100+ petition signatures. **We currently are approaching 1,000 signatures on a petition** against this encroachment, all done very manually and very grassroots. So there must be something to it that we have so many signatures against it or wouldn't everyone be for it, if it were so good? We of course don't have the buying power of a multi-billion dollar foreign entity. We do have the Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/379872356487791> with **1300+ members whom are against this monstrosity.**

If you look at any of the 25+ **Industrial Scale Solar/Wind Power Plants** being pushed on the Ohio heartland, none have the pushback or should I say outcry against that **Birch Solar 1** does. It is an outlier. It is amongst population and on lands near floodplains. Regardless of those two reasons – all of this massive acres of industrial solar/wind needs to slow down. Self-sustaining renewable solar/wind has its place, for their own municipalities such as Wapak and Minster, for the sustenance of their own industry like Whirlpool/Ball Plant in Findlay or Honda in Lakeview, or on homes, on industrial rooftops, on brownlands. But 2,600 – 5,000 – 10,000 acres of prime farmland at a clip? Where does it stop? Why so fast? I won't use this to outlay all the statistics. Our team and their vigorous efforts of study and painstaking unbiased review of the "impact" of this has and will continue to do so at www.regulateohiosolar.com

When this started and we got the notice, I thought we were the only ones impacted. I understand that the farmer's land is his and he can do with it what he wants – but to what peril of others. I thought I could probably be ok with something like a Honda of Anna an industry that sits on 500 acres of land because it will have employed 2800 people in 30 years. But this will help NO ONE EXCEPT LIGHTSOURCEBP. But when I found out it was 2,600 acres, and it would only employ 5 people, I was appalled. So, understand that I am not fighting for just me – I am fighting for that 30 year old with the 2 year old son and any future young residents who want to move to this area. They will not have a dream home to buy in the future with thousands of acres covered in glass in this area. If Shawnee Schools thinks it will attract new residents, they won't have any to go to a "new school". This will become a ghost township as will many others in Ohio if they accept this plight amongst itself.

So I ask of you. Do you think it is fair that the will of local citizens be overridden by the decisions of a state agency (Ohio Power Siting Board) that does not know the will of the local townships? The local townships have the best interest of their communities both economically, ecologically, and environmentally.

What is the difference if it was a Nuclear Plant or a Natural Gas Plant? The footprint of these industrial solar/wind power plants on the land use and scape impacts the local communities at a footprint not seen by other forms of energy already located in Ohio. Ohio needs to make sure our rural communities are not left with the risk.

Isn't it good for the schools? Is it? Not only do just the developers and farmer leasing reap the profits are going only to a certain few, disproportionate revenue that the schools will make over the years may just decrease. If that is what the township wants, then have at it. Where are the policies, state laws, and the regulations to which protection and accountability will be measured?

Isn't it good for business? Whose business? The foreign developer or private venture monolithic capitalist? No longterm employment locally. No viable local corporate business partner. This will only employ 5 permanent jobs. Again does the revenue far outweigh what your constituents will suffer?

This legislation is about giving everyone a voice by vote which is the only right thing to do since **Industrial Scale Solar/Wind Power Plants** transform a huge footprint and communities in such a monumental way. Local citizens should be the ones deciding whether the promised benefits are valid and whether they outweigh the negatives which come with such industrialization.

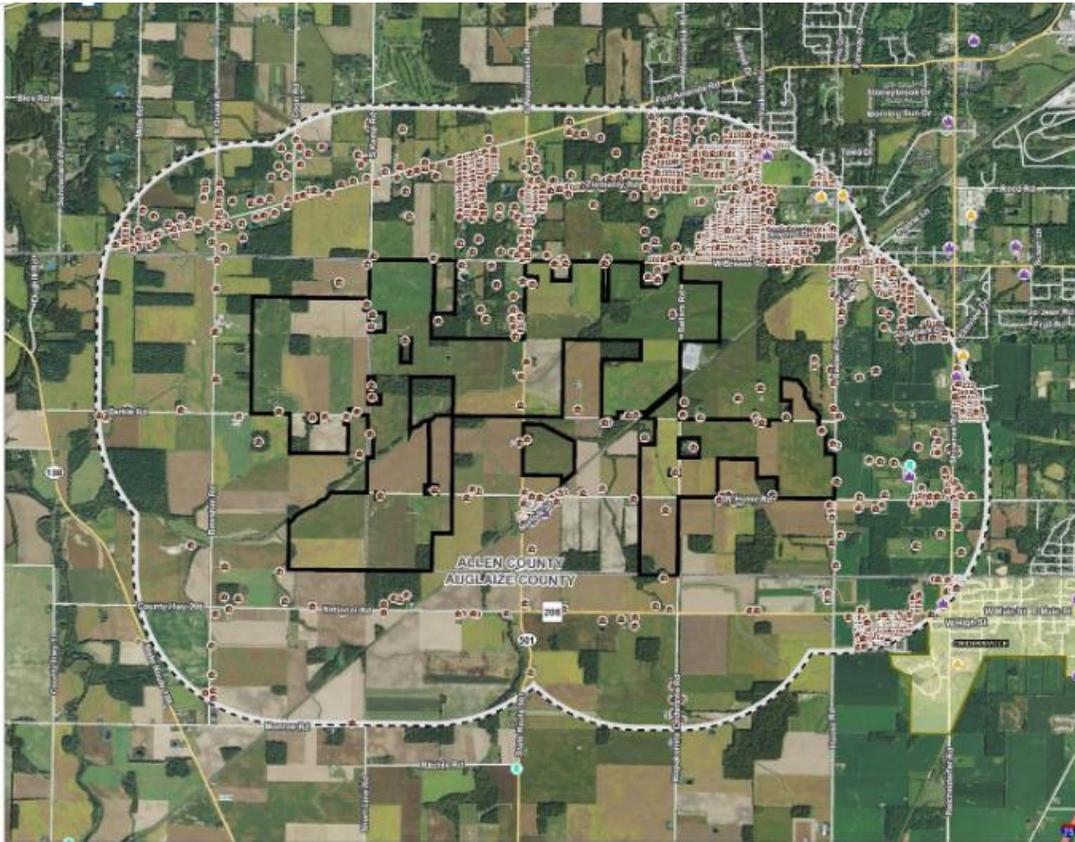
Since part of the bill is to ensure the public wellbeing and safety of local residents if a project is built, it would be great to mention that no matter whether people are for or against such projects there is a need for solar regulations.

REQUEST THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS/ADDITIONS TO SB 52 and HB 118:

1. No solar facility should have more than 75 non-participating homeowners within 1,500 feet of the solar facility.
2. No participating adjoining property with a legal dwelling may be bordered on more than two (2) sides by a solar facility.
3. Setbacks of five hundred feet (500) from all lot lines and three hundred feet (300) from public roads.
4. Setbacks of three hundred feet (300) from streams, creeks and rivers.
5. Solar equipment noise should not exceed 40 DBA LMAX as measured from the property line.

Please support SB52 and HB118 which allows at the very least a local vote. 1000+ petitions speak loud and clear.

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8-1

Sensitive Receptors Map

Client:
 Birch Solar 1, LLC
 Birch Solar Project

Project Location: Allen County, Ohio

Prepared by: J. L. Fisher
 Date: 08/14/2018

Scale:
 1" = 1,000 Feet
 (As original document size of 11x17)
 1:62,500

Legend

- Project Area
- 1 Mile Buffer
- Cemetery
- Place of Worship
- School
- Residence

Map Data:
 2018
 2018
 2018

Stantec

Page 1 of 1