

PROPONENT TESTIMONY
HB 118 House Public Utilities Committee
Barry E. Jerdon – Preble County
March 9, 2021

Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith, and the members of the Committee. My name is Barry Jerdon and I reside in the village of Fairhaven in Israel Township, Preble County. I am here in support of HB 118 that addresses the need for local citizens participation in the responsible siting of utility scale wind and solar projects in Ohio.

The focus of my testimony is on my experience as a long-time Israel Township resident, as co-leader of the Israel Township Neighborhood Watch Team, and as a volunteer at the Hueston Woods State Park in Israel Township. My home in Fairhaven is a mile south of the proposed solar field and Hueston Woods is several miles south of Fairhaven. Four Mile Creek flows through Fairhaven and Hueston Woods, both of which are downstream of the proposed field.

I have spent years quietly serving my community and am gravely concerned with the negative consequences the proposed solar project will have on my village, my township, and Hueston Woods State Park. I am concerned with the negative impact the project will have on the Four Mile Creek water quality, on our shallow wells, and the potential to contaminate Acton Lake in Hueston Woods, a place I cherish. I am, also, concerned with crime, a battle we have been fighting via the Neighborhood Watch Team for a decade. I am worried because Fairhaven is in a flood plain, and the project will increase the risk of flooding.

I have tried to stay informed on the proposed solar project in Israel Township to no avail. I provided testimony under oath sharing my concerns at a meeting in Eaton. I have received no response to my testimony concerns, no periodic project updates, and have no idea what is next. Local residents need to vote on large solar projects that will significantly impact our community. A vote appears the only means we will begin to force the project to become more transparent.