

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

HB 118 for the House Public Utilities Committee

Dennis W. Schreiner – Erie County

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Chairman Hoops, Vice Chairman Ray, Ranking Member Smith and members of the Committee. My name is Dennis Schreiner and I reside in Erie County. I am here in support of HB 118 and would like to speak about giving impacted communities a voice in the development and siting of utility-scale wind and solar projects.

The siting of industrial wind and solar power plants in rural areas that are primarily zoned as residential and agricultural has been a process with all the advantages on the side of the developer.

Under a cloak of secrecy, land agents use predatory practices to secure leases from landowners who do not understand the ramifications of the document they have signed. Numerous cases of buyer's remorse have been identified.

Peer pressure is used to convince owners to sign because everyone else has signed so the project is moving forward – why not cash in on your share of the money? Gag orders attached to land leases and “Good Neighbor Agreements” prohibits discussions concerning negative aspects of wind or solar projects.

The cash projections used to “sell” the deal extend to 40 years or more with very misleading assumptions with respect to turbine performance and electrical rate escalation. For example, Net Capacity Factor of 32%. Power sales price starting at \$70/MW with an annual escalation of 2% per year for a 40 Year period.

Not all areas are so keen on the development of wind farm. In Erie and Seneca counties the local geology is home to sensitive Karst formations and critical drinking water protection areas where underground water flows are at risk. Subterranean disturbances negatively impact the drainage of farm fields in a very alarming way. Only the people who will be directly affected can accurately assess the impact and determine whether or not the risk outweighs the “proposed” benefits.

Today you will be introduced to a Wind Project map of North Central Ohio. As you will easily see, the cumulative effects of these developments will have a profound effect on the quality of life of the people who live there. There can be no question that property values will suffer leading to reduced property tax revenues. Would you choose to move into this area? Would your children want to return home to a place where the horizon has been obliterated and the panoramic night sky is interrupted by synchronized flashing hazard lights? How will our employers attract talented young people to the area?

In order to be brief, the following "Bullet List" is offered for your consideration with the hope that you will ask follow-up questions as needed.

- Non-Leaseholder Residents are notified late in the process – often many years after leases are signed. Leases are not Recorded in a timely fashion.
- Ohio Power Siting Board Process requires very quick turnaround with respect to time for

local resident input. Only landowners inside the project area and abutting property owners have standing to intervene. Many others that will be affected are disenfranchised despite being directly impacted.

- Working residents often cannot attend County Commissioner Meetings, Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) hearings and meetings such as this during core working hours. Vacation time is often used to support family events and other personal needs. The advent of “virtual” meetings and hearings have reduced local participation severely.
- Local input at a meaningful level requires securing an attorney at considerable expense that is not reimbursed in any way.
- Township trustees and County Commissioners can voice opposition on behalf of residents but opposition of local officials cannot be acted on by the OPSB as basis of denial.
- In evaluating the application for a wind or solar project, the OPSB de-facto standard is that the wind company experts are right - local residents must prove them wrong/unsafe.

Why Target Wind and Solar Projects? ·

- Low Power density - 20000 acres per for 300 MWe Wind project and 1500 acres for a 300 MWe solar project.
- The movement of blades and flashing of night lights makes them impossible to ignore - affecting drivers, wildlife, and residents establishing a distraction 24/7.
- Significant source of Electro-Magnetic Interference (EMI) and Radio Frequency Interference in areas of high population density affects AM, FM, TV, and agricultural GPS signals.
- Determination of need by OPSB is lacking

In most areas of the US, local zoning or control governs how and where industrial wind turbine and solar projects are developed. These industrial power plants in Ohio are being forced into rural residential communities where the residents are denied local zoning rights. This legislation will restore some siting rights to the community and I urge your support.