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March 6, 2021

Public Utilities Committee
The Ohio House of Representatives
Columbus, Ohio

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 118

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of HB 118. It is brief and to the point, focusing on two issues that the proposed bill addresses: transparency and local control regarding industrial scale wind and solar projects.

My personal connection to these issues is the 30 acre property that I own in Preble County, Ohio that may be bordered on three sides by the proposed Alamo solar project now under consideration by the Ohio Power Siting Board. My property is wooded and thus was not pursued by the solar development company as a site for solar panels. I was not informed of the company's solicitations until the application process was underway for a year or more and was finally informed by a neighboring farmer who had been approached by the development company. By then, the company was nearly to the public meeting phase of the OPSB application process.

Such blatant lack of transparency places neighbors who are not participating in industrial scale wind and solar projects at a severe disadvantage. I believe the bill under consideration addresses that concern and will help level the playing field which is presently dominated by wind and solar development companies.

Additionally, I support HB 118 because it provides for common sense local control of the application and certification process. For example, Preble County has had a land use plan in place for more than 20 years which requires the sale of agricultural land less than 40 acres to submit to a stringent zoning process with ultimate approval by the county commissioners if it is to be used for a purpose other than agriculture. Yet out-of-state solar development companies have circumvented our locally controlled process by seeking approval from the OPSB to convert thousands of acres of prime agricultural land to industrial solar use.

With these issues in mind, I am formally registering my support for HB 118. It is essential for the interests of the state to be in harmony with the interests of local communities and for the rapid expansion of industrial scale wind and solar development to be reasonably checked. I believe that the proposed bill will help to achieve those outcomes.


