

Testimony of Stephanie and Nathan Miller
Seneca County, Ohio
In support of HB-118
Ohio House Public Utilities Committee
March 9, 2021

Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, ranking member Smith, members of the committee, we write as proponents of HB-118.

Why did you choose to live where you live? Did you choose to buy a house where you did because you grew up in the area? Did you choose to buy the house you did because it was in a safe area to raise children? Why did you choose to go to the doctor you go to? Was it because they care about the health and well-being of you and your entire family? We live in a country where we have the right to make the decisions that we deem right and safe for our family. We live in a democratic country where we have the right to have a voice. I believe that EVERYONE should have a say in anything that has a direct effect on their well-being and livelihood, which includes wind turbines that will put all our lives that we have created at risk in a variety of ways.

My name is Stephanie Miller, and I am a resident of Reed Township, which is in Seneca County, where I was born and raised. One major reason that I stayed in this area was because I feel that it is a safe and wonderful place to raise a family. My husband and I have a 10-year-old daughter and we are beginning to second guess this decision due to the push to build INDUSTRIAL wind turbines all over the area in which we live and have made a home for our family. Others strong desire for MONEY that they feel these wind turbines have to offer them is putting my entire family, friends, and community in which I live in danger. A small group of individuals should NOT have the right to make a decision that can totally change the way my family lives in the future.

Wind turbines are a major safety risk for everyone living in the area that they are built. First and foremost, the setback laws of these wind turbines are not enough. There has been talk about reducing the current setback laws in the state of Ohio so that these wind turbines can be built closer to people's property and homes. This is not looking out for the well-being of those living in these areas. The manufacturer of these wind turbines has recommended a specific distance for a reason, but instead the wind companies are pushing to reduce them even further. Therefore, it sounds as though we have many more concerned about their pocketbooks than the safety of the people. The distance that ice chunks, for example, can be thrown from these wind turbines is unsettling, especially if these setback laws are ever reduced. The vision of our daughter continuing to grow up in this area and being able to play safely outside on our OWN property that we have worked extremely hard for is fading away as the idea of these wind turbines are becoming clearer.

Along with the safety of my family being able to enjoy the property we have worked hard for; my husband and I also worry about the idea of whether emergency personnel will be able to reach us if something were to happen to any one of us. 14 years ago, this coming August, I was in a horrible car accident that almost took my life. This accident occurred in Venice Township, which is about 4/5 miles from my home, and I had to be life-flighted from the scene of the accident. The location of my accident was planned to have three wind turbines built. From my understanding of the research that I have done on life flight, the ability for life flight to land to provide its assistance is not guaranteed and will be compromised by a variety of obstacles. Due to the air pressure around these turbines, I have read that life flight may have to land anywhere from 2 miles to 6 miles or more away from the actual site of the emergency. This is a huge distance when these wind turbines are widespread and located in clusters, which make it difficult for emergency personnel to get close. The Director of Operations Life Flight in Toledo, OH released a comment that they do not have specific regulations regarding wind turbines. However, they do have to follow FAA regulations that govern how Helicopter Air Ambulance helicopters in the United States operate. Pilots must be able to clear all obstacles by 300 feet during the day or by 500 feet at night, while staying 500 feet below the cloud "ceiling" above them. This becomes a major obstacle when life flight is necessary to save a person's life and there are 649 feet wind turbines all over the area. I have been in contact with local life flight personnel and local emergency individuals. They have been told nothing about what would happen if there were an emergency. However, the wind companies tell us not to worry because life flight and the local fire department will be in contact with one another if something were to happen so that a decision can be made as to how to proceed. This is very upsetting because it is in these situations where life flight is needed, that EVERY second counts. Through discussions with local fire department personnel, they too are looking for answers to these same questions. There is not time when something happens to discuss a plan with the necessary local emergency personnel in these life-or-death situations. If this had been the case 13.5 years ago, I may not be here today with my family and I do not want this to become a reality for someone else.

In conclusion, please pass this important legislation. This will allow local voters in individual townships to have a voice in whether they want these industrial wind turbines in the area in which they live. Currently, there is not a local vote and instead all the decisions are being put in the hands of the Ohio Power Siting Board. This group of people have no connection to the area in which these wind farms are proposed and will not be affected by them. It is only right to allow the people that live in the area to have a say in whether they want these wind turbines in their townships. Forcing a project on a community without allowing a local vote will create long lasting and devastating effects on the area forever.

Thank you for your time,

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