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Ohio House Public Utilities Committee  
Written Opponent Comments on House Bill 118  
Green Energy Ohio  
Jane Harf

March 23, 2021

Chair Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Public Utilities Committee, my name is Jane Harf and I am the Executive Director of Green Energy Ohio (GEO). Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments as an opponent of House Bill 118. Green Energy Ohio (GEO) is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable energy policies, technologies, and practices. We represent a diverse membership of individuals, businesses, community and government entities, and academic institutions who share GEO's mission.

House Bill 118 would establish a dangerous precedent in which a minority of individuals could overturn an agency decision that had been made through a rigorous process in which all parties had ample opportunity to participate. Residents in the project footprint are able to attend public information meetings prior to the developer filing an application with the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB). During the OPSB review, there are multiple avenues for local input and engagement. The OPSB employs an adjudicatory process in which local residents have the chance to participate in public hearings, as well as judicial proceedings where they can present evidence, call witnesses, provide testimony, employ cross-examination, and negotiate stipulations and conditions for specific energy development projects. There is an official process for appealing a decision with the OPSB, ultimately leading to the Ohio Supreme Court.

The most unfortunate consequence of HB 118 is the detrimental impact it would have on Ohio's economic and energy future. This bill would send a signal to the investment community, renewable energy developers, and corporations seeking clean power that Ohio is not open for the business of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The proven economic development benefits of large-scale renewable energy projects would go elsewhere, and the particular irony is that local communities are among the entities that benefit the most from the presence of facilities.

Green Energy Ohio is opposed to creating a last-minute opportunity for project opponents whose arguments failed during the rigorous OPSB process to undermine Ohio's economic development and the clean energy future that a majority of Ohioans want to see.

I appreciate your consideration of this testimony.