

March 20, 2021

The Honorable Representative Hoops  
Chairman, House Public Utilities  
77 South High Street 11th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Opposition to HB 118 related to the taking of private land by legislation

Dear Representative Hoops:

My name is Michael Lutmer and I own a farm in Highland County at 4120 Sharpsville Rd Hillsboro, Ohio. I write the committee today to oppose HB 118, a government proposal to restrict my land use arbitrarily and without reason. I consider HB 118 an attempted taking by government.

As a farmer, I take on all the risk brought by mother nature. Diversification into a solar project represents a unique opportunity to supplement my volatile farming income with an income stream that is fixed over the life of the project. This is simply a good business practice.

I was surprised to read the bill sponsors believe they are “*allowing citizens of a township the ability to exercise their property rights through a public referendum with regards to solar projects.*” What’s next, where I can park my truck, build my barn or how big my house can be?

The property rights referring to in HB 118 are held by the person who writes the mortgage check. Solar development projects are heavily regulated. Community needs are looked at through the entire siting board process.. While the outcome of the siting decision may be long, uncertain, and costly, it is the elements contained in the permitting that result in the best outcome for the local community.

Putting a solar project, or my land use rights, up for a popularity vote by people that may never see my land is bad government policy. The current process thoroughly investigates the challenges and arrive at a conclusion that’s based upon facts and comprise by the impacted parties – not an entire town. HB 118 feels more like a political battle between energy sources than a land use effort.

If the fate of power generating facilities were based upon a popularity contest, we wouldn’t have natural gas plants, electricity generation stations or reliable electricity.

**Please vote no on HB 118.** Preserve my rights to determine how my property will be used and my financial future will play out. As elected officials, your job is to bring economic security and opportunity to Ohio. With data centers and tech companies coming to Ohio to locate

and power their facilities with green energy, you should be laying out the welcome mat, not chasing big corporations away by backwards policies.

Sincerely,

Michael Lutmer

Cc: Members of the House Public Utilities Committee  
Governor DeWine