

June 22,2021,

Representative James Hoops, Chairman of the House Public Utilities Committee

I am writing asking for support of SB 52. Every county has areas of land that need to be protected. This includes agricultural and natural resources. Densely populated areas should also be protected. Exclusion zones will help protect these areas. Giving a seat at the OPSB to local government will give that county a chance to be heard. Local land use plans have no meaning without the power to implement them.

I am familiar with the OPBS process from personal experience and I watched the testimony given to the Ohio House of Representatives on the OPSB process. The public notices were printed in the Norwalk Reflector; I do not subscribe to that paper. I subscribe to the Willard Times Junction and there was no information presented there regarding the projects for Huron County. The public informational meeting is only a process the developer can check off their list. It consists of only a few posters and a few representatives from the wind company and a table for the OPSB. The first informational meeting I went to was for Seneca Wind and the developer told me there would be no noise and he was not aware of any requirements for red flashing lights on top of the turbines at night. The public comments include many form type letters from people outside the project area that the developer encourages people to write or sign. The public hearing is where concerned citizens can speak; but are they really being listened to? To participate in the adjudicatory hearing, you must be an intervenor and have an attorney represent you. There are many levels to the process of voting for the approval of a project. My question is are the ones voting truly informed? Did they themselves read the application, read the public comments, attend the public hearing or adjudicatory hearing? Does the OPSB conduct their own studies; sound studies would be a good place to start. The OPSB also has to work with the rules and laws of the State of Ohio.

It is up to the General Assembly to give a meaningful voice to the local communities. There are many solar and wind projects in the planning process at the PJM so please do not delay the passage of a bill that will give some control at the local level.

Thank You,

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