

**PROPONENT TESTIMONY**  
**SB 52 House Public Utilities Committee**  
**Jenifer Adams – Greene County**  
**June 23, 2021**

Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Committee. My name is Jenifer Adams and I reside in rural Greene County. I am here in support of SB 52.

I am part of an organization in Greene County called Citizens for Greene Acres. We came together in 2019 after we discovered our rural community and Greene County's farmland were under threat by Kingwood Solar 1 (Kingwood). SB 52, as currently written, will not help our community because Kingwood 1 would be grandfathered in. I'm here to fight for the passage of this bill anyway. Rural communities and farmland across Ohio need protection now! Hundreds of farming communities are already, or soon will be, victims of current Ohio law. Current law prevents the opportunity for *meaningful* participation in the siting decisions for utility-scale wind and solar and *facilitates* the unchecked conversion of agricultural land to industrial energy complexes.

You may believe that Ohioans are protected by the "rigorous" Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) process. On May 12, 2021, the OPSB Executive Director made a presentation to this committee and was asked if it was in fact true that no wind or solar projects had ever been denied by the OPSB. The way the question was answered was crafty and left the impression that some projects have actually been denied. I was perplexed by this because we were previously informed by the OPSB that none of these projects had ever been denied. Upon follow-up with the OPSB, it's been confirmed that the "rigorous" OPSB process has yet to result in the denial of a single utility-scale wind or solar project.

I personally believe the OPSB has a valid and useful purpose as it pertains to reviewing and certifying energy developments. However, local municipalities are best suited to determine whether these developments fit their land use plans or if a conversion from an agricultural/tourist economy to an energy generation economy is right for their region. Even though the OPSB has jurisdiction to certificate these projects, local municipalities still have an obligation to stand by their land use plans and support their constituents. Right now, the only way they can do that properly is to intervene during the OPSB evidentiary hearings which we all know takes lots of money! Our counties and townships should not be forced to spend thousands of taxpayer dollars to perform this responsibility.

In a recent opponent testimony for SB 52, a land baron *living in Florida* determined that the Kingwood 1 power plant was best for OUR Ohio farming community. Everyone knows that individual property rights only go so far. Local land use plans and zoning set the boundaries for what can be done on a person's property, and thereby provide reasonable assurances and protections for residents of a community/neighborhood. This is true even in agricultural areas. If it weren't, agritourism wouldn't need its own separate designation. It's important to remember, the leaseholders for these energy facilities aren't simply adding a barn to their property or growing a new crop. They're proposing to encompass entire rural communities in industrial complexes.

Every county has important agricultural, natural and cultural assets that need protection. SB 52 is a good first step toward restoring some power to local governments who are best suited to determine which areas are appropriate for utility-scale wind and solar facilities. SB 52 is a must and is long overdue. I'm urging you to pass this bill now!