



House Public Utilities Committee  
SB 52 - Interested Party Testimony  
Sarah Spence, Executive Director  
June 23, 2021

Chairman Hoops , Vice Chair Ray, Ranking Member Smith and members of the House Public Utilities Committee: thank you for allowing me to submit interested party testimony on substitute Senate Bill 52. My name is Sarah Spence, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Ohio Conservative Energy Forum (OHCEF).

OHCEF was founded in 2016 to provide a forum for conservatives to discuss a diverse, all-of-the above energy portfolio – one that includes not only existing sources of traditional energy generation, but one that also seeks to expand the development of clean and renewable energy sources. OHCEF believes that clean energy and energy made clean through technology can strengthen both our economy and our national security while providing unmatched opportunities for Ohio-led innovation and job creation.

For generations, all forms of energy have been a driver of economic development for many Ohio communities. We have all seen the economic benefits that coal and natural gas development have provided to eastern and southeastern Ohio. The clean energy industry is no different. Solar and wind development already represent billions of dollars in economic development across Ohio.

OHCEF appreciates the time, effort and thoughtful consideration the bill sponsors and members of this committee have given in listening to the concerns of impacted Ohio citizens, local government officials, property owners, and the renewable energy industry in trying to craft a workable compromise for SB 52. We understand that balancing local concerns while allowing energy development to occur can be complex and have conflicting priorities.

The substitute bill better tries to strike this balance by allowing ad-hoc OPSB members from project footprint, requiring county-level notification, and allowing approval, modification or non-action on projects. We do remain very concerned about the bill's overall impact on private property rights, especially in situations where counties could choose to implement county-wide bans on development.



While OHCEF believes this bill is far from perfect, there is no doubt that the latest version of the bill is a significant improvement from the as-introduced bill thanks to the willingness of the bill sponsors to work in good faith to balance everyone's concerns. Their actions have helped moved OHCEF from opposed to interested party for substitute SB 52.

Chairman Hoops and members of the committee, thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to share OHCEF's perspective on this legislation.