

Attached, please find a witness slip.

Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee Members:

House Public Utilities Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony for hearings to be held on March 23, 2021.

Three strikes and you're out. The Ohio General Assembly needs to finally, permanently strike out bills like SB 52 and its companion HB 118 that further gut renewable energy in our state. There was a failed attempt to stick the essence of SB 52 into HB 6 although that amendment wasn't even as egregious as SB 52 because it only pertained to wind and not solar projects, then there was the failed HB 104 which again only applied to wind turbines. Enough is enough!

<https://energynews.us/2019/11/22/ohio-bill-would-let-townships-block-wind-projects-after-they-are-approved/>

<https://go.tiffinohio.net/2019/11/after-his-first-attempt-failed-bill-reineke-plans-to-introduce-new-legislation-aimed-at-wind-energy-industry/>

The hypocrisy of SB 52 is stunning since local governments and citizens have no veto power over nuclear or fossil fuel plants and in the case of gas and oil drilling, municipalities are expressing forbidden by Ohio law to restrict such drilling within their local jurisdictions. The audacity of the General Assembly to again propose local control over benign wind and solar while at least three bills have recently been introduced to limit local authority over fossil fuel use.

<https://www.cleveland.com/open/2021/03/ohio-lawmakers-seek-to-limit-local-authority-over-fossil-fuel-use.html>

SB 52 and HB 118 are not about local voices being heard. Prospective projects already undergo an extensive siting process with many opportunities for local participation and input. Developers hold local public information meetings before filing an application with the Ohio Power Siting Board. The OPSB conducts public hearings and judicial proceedings where members of the community can present evidence and testimony, call and cross-examine witnesses, and negotiate and stipulate conditions for energy projects.

These bills propose township referendums to stop wind and solar projects AFTER they have been approved by the OPSB. These bills are blatant attempts to further cripple wind and solar power in Ohio and stop investment in renewable energy at a time when private sector demand for renewables is at an all time high.

Wind power has already been greatly impeded by some of the most odious wind turbine setbacks in the country. In 2012, Ohio was 13th in the country for new wind capacity and investment; this virtually ceased due to the 2014 passage of HB 483 (as part of the budget bill) which mandated some of the most restrictive wind turbine setbacks in the country and severely impeded Ohio's 2008 renewable energy and efficiency standards. HB 6 finished the job. To add insult to injury, both SB 52 & HB 118 would incredibly expand property line setbacks for wind turbines, and the bills would not only apply to future projects but to pending projects on which companies have already spent millions of dollars relying on current Ohio law.

<https://energynews.us/2015/01/22/midwest/drops-in-ohio-clean-energy-investment-could-hurt-jobs-growth/>

http://www.cleveland.com/open/index.ssf/2015/01/ohio_renewable_energy_policies.html

<https://windexchange.energy.gov/states/oh>

<https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/Setback-Changes-Will-End-New-Wind-Farms-in-Ohio>

Among widespread opposition to the infamous HB 6, an Ohio Conservative Energy Forum February 2019 poll found large majorities of conservative voters preferred investment in solar, wind, and efficiency and "opposed special fees to keep old nuclear plants operating." The conservative Buckeye Institute and Ohio Chapter of Americans for Prosperity testified against HB 6, as "corporate welfare...(and) a glorified slush fund."

<https://www.cleveland.com/business/2019/02/conservative-ohio-voters-want-most-of-ohios-electricity-to-come-from-renewable-sources.html>

<https://energynews.us/2019/05/06/midwest/conservatives-criticize-firstenergy-nuclear-bailout-bill-as-corporate-welfare/>

These bills are the antithesis of good, sound government. SB 54 and HB 118 "anti-bills". They are:

- **Anti-Economic Development** - There is huge economic opportunity in rural Ohio for solar and wind projects. Developers want to invest in projects which economically benefit landowners, school districts, and political subdivisions.
- **Anti-Competitive** - As noted above, Ohio is already at a huge competitive renewable disadvantage when it comes to renewable solar and wind power which are the future of energy in the U.S. These bills further stifle renewables and discourage developers and investors from considering Ohio.
- **Anti-Consumer** - These bills restrict energy supply choices potentially increasing electricity costs.
- **Anti Business** - These bills also limit energy supply choices for businesses, interfere with energy cost management, and hinder control of future energy.
- **Anti-Job** - According to Bureau of Labor statistics in 2019, the number one and number two fastest growing jobs in the U.S. are in the solar and wind industries respectively. Renewable energy manufacturing jobs and solar and wind installer and technicians are in high demand.
<http://redgreenandblue.org/2019/01/27/solar-wind-tech-fastest-growing-jobs-us/>
<https://www.energy.gov/eere/articles/5-fastest-growing-jobs-clean-energy>

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Connie Kline
Past Ohio Sierra Club Nuclear Committee Chair