

EDF Renewables Testimony Opposing Ohio Senate Bill 52 and House Bill 118

Before the Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee and

Ohio House Public Utilities Committee

March 23, 2021

EDF Renewables is a renewable energy developer, owner, and operator, with over 30 years of experience in renewable energy development. EDF Renewables (EDFR) has developed over 16,000 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy across the United State and operates/maintains over 11,000 MW. EDFR is developing utility scale solar projects across the state of Ohio.

EDFR submits this testimony in opposition to Ohio Senate Bill 52 and House Bill 118.

Ohio's legislature has established energy facility siting policies that place permitting authority for such projects in the hands of the OPSB. The OPSB process one of the most comprehensive, rigorous, quasi-judicial permitting frameworks in the county. It requires permit applicants to conduct extensive pre-application outreach and environmental studies to ensure that energy facilities are compatible with Ohio's environmental laws and social values. OPSB's professional staff conduct extensive environmental, social and economic analysis of potential impacts and mitigation measures for each proposed project. OPSB brings in outside experts to supplement analysis where needed. OPSB takes into account input on projects from local, state and federal units of government, local residents, and potentially impacted communities. OPSB permits provide clear conditions to minimize negative impacts and maximize safety for construction and long-term operation of utility scale solar projects. SB 52 and HB 118 turns this exhaustive technical process over to a local referendum creating uncertainty and new obstacles to new energy infrastructure investment in Ohio.

Ohio stands to benefit from up to \$18 billion in new capital investment from solar projects. Solar projects bring tremendous economic opportunities to local communities including hundreds of well-paying construction jobs and new, long term, stable tax revenues to public school systems and to counties which are foundations of local economies. Solar has the potential to create up to 54,000 high skill jobs in Ohio at a time when the country is recovering from pandemic and pivoting toward renewable energy. Each individual utility scale solar project brings tax revenues measured in the tens of millions of dollars to local communities over the life of each project. These jobs, revenues and positive local benefits will be lost if SB 52 and HB 118 are enacted.

SB 52 and HB 118 create uncertainty for business investment in Ohio's energy infrastructure. The bills change the rules of the road at a time when tremendous capital investment is being made in the state based on current laws and policies. Enacting SB 52 and HB 118 at this time will have a chilling effect on investments in energy infrastructure in Ohio and will cause Ohio to lose out on new, direct financial and employment benefits as a result.

EDF Renewables urges your opposition to SB 52 and HB 118.