

Testimony of Joseph R DeMare on HB 52 03/22/21

As Co-Chair of the Wood County Green Party, I urge the Senate to vote NO on SB 52. This clearly is not an attempt to promote local control. If that were the case, also included in this bill would be requirements for local referenda on other energy sources. Fracking pads, natural gas generation plants, energy pipelines, nuclear power plants, coal plants, and other energy sources and energy infrastructure have a history of causing environmental damage in the State of Ohio. Wind and Solar do not. There have been numerous pipeline leaks, fracking fluid spills, near disastrous nuclear accidents (such as Davis-Besse's 'hole in the head' incident), well fires, pipeline explosions, and other direct threats to the health and safety of Ohioans. If wind and solar are so dangerous as to require a separate referendum process, these other energy sources are much more dangerous, dirty, ugly, and expensive.

Since no other energy source is included in this legislation, clearly its true intent is to prevent the development of wind and solar power in the State of Ohio.

Just over two years ago, I testified before the Senate urging them to vote "NO" on HB6. It was clearly an anti-environmental bill being pushed through the legislature in opposition to the will of the people of Ohio. This legislation is similar. One lesson we learned in the bribery and corruption associated with HB6 is that the opponents of wind and solar power are perfectly willing to use any kind of disinformation. The advertising campaign that broke so many laws also broke moral and ethical rules by using blatant lies to try to convince the people of Ohio that those opposed to HB6 were secret Chinese operatives. We now know from bitter experience that these kinds of lies and disinformation will be used in any referendum campaign around wind or solar projects. No investor is going to risk billions of dollars on trying to win a referendum election in this kind of atmosphere.

HB6 branded Ohio as a state where irrational energy policies, supported by deep corruption make investment in renewable energy extremely risky. SB 52 proves that the Senate has learned nothing from that experience. The same Legislators who drafted and pushed HB6 through are back at the trough trying to score a second win against renewable energy and a clean, Green future with SB 52.

Let's give Democracy a try for a change. Polls show Ohioans want more wind and solar power. Let's give them what they want and need. Vote NO on SB 52.