

POPONENT TESTIMONY

SB 52

Ryan J. Brenneman

May 17th, 2021

Chairman McColly, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Committee, my name is Ryan J. Brenneman, and I am the owner of Brenneman Excavating and resident of Allen County.

I am writing you about SB 52. As a small business construction company owner, I have been researching what is allowed to occur under current Ohio law with the solar and wind industry. Under the current system these projects cut out local control over where the project will be placed. Solar and wind and very energy “light” require a lot of land to generate very little electricity. I support any bill that allows for the local township to set aside where the projects can occur in the township. Just like I have to follow where I can locate my business based on zoning set by the township, this industry should also have to follow such rules. And my business does not take up acres and acres or land like these power generation facilities.

This bill allows for a township to determine if they allow such a large use of the township and allows the township to create overlay or zones for such projects. This gives the local community more control over the development in the township. The OPSB at this time does not allow for that kind of cooperation with the local community. They are looking more at the “need” of Ohio not the “need” of the local community, and this bill would bring back balance in these large-scale power generation plants. The land owners would also have to abide by zoning laws like the rest of us.

These large-scale facilities are not “short term” either. They will change the landscape of a township for 30 to 50 years. That is no small amount of time. This bill allows the community to decide if that type of commitment for potentially a large portion of their township is a good fit for them. Some townships will decide that it is and some may not, others will set those overlay districts for a certain portion of the township. This bill will benefit local communities across Ohio and make the wind and solar projects more successful in the long run.

This industry is currently getting placed in rural Ohio not because it is necessarily the best place to put it, but because it is cheap and easy for these wind and solar companies to complete the projects and thus increases the profits for the company. Without this bill large areas of a township could be sacrificed for the “greater good” at the peril of those that live in that community. It is time to allow the local community to decide what they want to occur in their township.

Thank you for your time,

Ryan J. Brenneman

President Brenneman Excavating

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