

Proponent Testimony of Jeremy Kitson on SB 52  
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Wednesday, May 19, 2021

Chairman McColley, Vice-Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams, and members of the energy committee, thank you for taking the time to read my written testimony.

My name is Jeremy Kitson and I am a rural resident of Harrison Township in Van Wert County, home to the largest industrial scale wind project in the State of Ohio and a soon to be developed 46 megawatt industrial solar array. I would love to present to you in person as I have multiple times in the past, but my job simply will not permit it this week. Out of great respect for your time, and the abundance of interest my family and many others in rural Van Wert, County, have with this bill, I will only focus on a few key concerns.

The Ohio Power Siting Board has shown historically that local communities have had little or no impact on the decision making when it comes to siting industrial scale utility projects. While I respect the members of the OPSB and appreciate their technical expertise, many rural Ohioans like myself feel like we are not heard when we present the numerous concerns we have with utility scale renewable energy projects. Rural Ohioans do not have the time or resources that energy developers do to influence the decision making on a useful scale at the OPSB. That is why it is imperative that a strong majority of rural residents in my community strongly support SB 52. We have been engaged and working hard to restore true local control for many years on this issue. No type of utility scale energy project consumes more land than wind and solar. Comparing these technologies to other baseload generating facilities is an apples to oranges comparison. That is why this bill is needed as an avenue for us to decide what we feel is right for our communities. Rural residents are all about fairness and democracy, most especially when numerous studies can be presented on the negative impacts of utility scale renewable energy. When it can be clearly proven that a project of this magnitude can depreciate the value of my largest life investment in my home, there is no doubt I believe I should have a direct say on development. We own a small farm and we could choose to lease our ground if approached, but we would never say yes. We care about our neighbors deeply, and we feel a project of this type would be a negative on our community dynamic. I have seen this first hand after the Blue Creek Project went into operation. The community is fractured, and in many cases, irreparably. If these developers truly wanted to be a good community member why wouldn't they support legislation like this? This legislation would require them to work with all community members, not just a select few. And should they get the support of the majority in the community, my family will gladly accept the result. That is how true democracy works. We know what's best for Harrison Township, let us decide for ourselves. Should you wish to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me anytime via email at [kitson29@gmail.com](mailto:kitson29@gmail.com) or at 419-357-2815.

Respectfully,  
Jeremy J. Kitson  
Harrison Township  
Van Wert County, Ohio