

Testimony of Michael Luptner

I own a farm in Highland County at 4120 Sharpsville Rd Hillsboro, Ohio. SB 52 Substitute Bill proposes to restrict my land use without reason other than political motive. SB 52 does not consider my best interests, it simply takes my power and hands it to the government.

As a farmer, I take on all the risk brought by mother nature. Diversification into a solar project represents a unique opportunity to supplement my volatile farming income with an income stream that is fixed over the life of the project. This is simply a good business practice.

This policy is a very slippery slope. I was even more surprised to see that the new version allows township trustees to kill a project with passage of a resolution any time prior to issuance of the OPSB certificate - if they determine it is "not in the public interest." . What's next, where I can park my truck, build my barn or how big my house can be?

Why do other people get to decide what I can or cannot do with my land? The property rights referred to in SB 52 are held by the person who writes the mortgage check. Even more so, why do township trustees, who do not know me or my best interests, get to hold so much power over land that is not their's?

Improv the current process that thoroughly investigates the challenges and arrive at a conclusion that's based upon facts and comprise by the impacted parties – not an entire town. SB 52 feels more like a political battle between energy sources than a land use effort. Please stop putting the government where the government does not belong. My land and my choices on what to do with it are at stake.

Please vote no on SB 52 and its new provisions. Preserve my rights to determine how my property will be used and my financial future will play out. As elected officials, your job is to bring economic security and opportunity to Ohio. With data centers and tech companies coming to Ohio to locate and power their facilities with green energy, you should be laying out the welcome mat, not chasing big corporations away by backwards policies.