

**Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee**  
**May 19, 2021**  
**Written Proponent Testimony**  
**Scott Newbury**

Chairman McColley, Vice Chairman Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Committee. My name is Scott Newbury and I am a resident of Franklin County.

Unlike local zoning authorities that have codified standards for nearly all conceivable land use, OPSB has no standards regarding those things that most impact non-participating land owners such as setbacks, screening, fencing, glare, construction and operation noise etc. for utility-scale solar. This has created a situation where every project must be deliberated individually at great legal expense for both the Developer and neighboring Property Owners. Furthermore, OPSB has continued this approach despite hearing the same arguments against these projects over and over again almost verbatim.

Fundamentally, there is simply no state wide 'public need' for wind or solar projects. As has been painfully illustrated recently in Texas, Ohio residents NEED a robust and reliable power grid that delivers energy at a fair price. For the health of the environment long term, we have established goals of Zero Carbon emissions. This does not mean solar or wind. Ohio has lagged behind other states in renewable projects but has also failed to learn anything from other State's failures or current practices.

Specifically, early proponents and adopters like California, Nevada and Arizona have blocked a number of new projects over environmental concerns and many locals are not renewing generation contracts due to high consumer prices. Germany's lauded '*Energiewende*' renewable energy program has become an unmitigated disaster that threatens to topple their entire economy. Even when augmented by battery storage systems, wind and solar are simply too unreliable, require far too much land, cost too much and are too inefficient. The only way to balance our actual needs with our long term goals is Nuclear and Biomass power generation.

Nuclear generation is extremely power dense, reliable and when regulated by NRC, extremely safe. Furthermore, compared to the average solar generation facility, which in the short term employs a handful of low skill 'assemblers' during construction and perhaps four or five low skill full time employees once operational; a nuclear power plant requires up to 3,500 skilled tradesmen during construction and employs 500-1000 full time technicians during operation with an average yearly salary of \$100,000.

Despite being the only renewable energy source with a viable long term future, Biomass power plants are often cast in a negative light thanks to failed bio-fuel ethanol subsidies and the current practice of shipping biomass overseas instead of using it locally. Nearly any plant based product can serve as fuel: wood, crops, yard waste, garbage, landfill gas etc. Unlike solar and wind which require an irreversible land use change, this flexibility enhances the market for a farmer's current crops and introduces new opportunities for profit from more energy centric crops like trees, switch grass or elephant grass.

Biomass power plants can even be made multi-fuel capable and burn natural gas if there is a biomass supply issue.

Even if you disagree with this assessment, given the abysmal state of the OPSB approval process that seemingly only benefits the legal professionals, this bill should pass with unanimous support.

Unless there is a shift in state policy to follow intelligent, well-conceived Nuclear energy centered carbon reduction programs like that implemented in France or being pursued by China, we are destined for failure like Germany; Yes, despite being the source for nearly all solar panels being installed in our state, even China has staked their own energy production future in nuclear.

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