

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

Sub. SB 52

Shelly D. Bendele (Auglaize County)

May 19, 2021

Chairman McColley, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Committee. My name is Shelly Bendele and I reside in Auglaize County. I support Sub. Senate Bill 52 and would like to share my reasons why I support the passage of this bill.

I support this bill as it will return back to Ohio Townships the right to manage the land use in a manner that is desired by the majority of its residents. These proposed bills provide a reasonable and fair process for renewable energy developers' to identify which parts of Ohio are willing to welcome such investment into their community. I call on you to support and assist with the immediate passage of these two bills.

I support this legislation for the following reasons:

Multiple states throughout the United States have some form of local control for the governance of industrial wind/solar developments.

Current law, as well as the application process at the OPSB, does not adequately (if at all) consider the concerns of a community that is impacted by wind/solar developments. Only the concerns of the adjacent/abutting property owners have the opportunity to intervene and only if they can afford legal representation to do so. Thus giving wind/solar developers an unfair advantage in the process as many have full-time legal staff within their organizations. The costs for abutting residents wishing to intervene can cost tens of thousands of dollars.

The public interest, convenience and necessity of such projects should first take into account the public immediately surrounding such developments and who can be adversely affected by such developments. It is the opinion of these Ohioans that should carry significant weight in the wind/solar application process as they know best how such a development might impact their community as a whole. Not ambiguous/vague criteria currently utilized and twisted by developers for corporate gain and only considered/judged by unelected staff unfamiliar with the area. (To be exact, eight determining criteria (as defined by the OPSB) or which only seven apply to wind/solar.)

Residents and business, other than wind/solar developments in this case, have had to comply with local zoning and regulations for decades. Thus creating an unfair advantage for wind/solar developments that will consume thousands of acres of prime agricultural land, create minimal full time employment opportunities for local residents, and while enjoying large investment/energy production tax credits (in some cases close to equal that which residential consumers pay per kilowatt hour).

Thank you.

Shelly Bendele