

Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee  
Senate Bill 52  
Opponent Testimony  
May 25, 2021

Chair McColley, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams, and Member of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee:

Agriculture is the state's number-one industry, contributing \$123.8 billion annually to Ohio's economy, with over 40% of the sales from livestock and poultry farms. Some of the economic contributions of our individual industries in Ohio are as follows:

- Ohio's cattle farmers raise approximately 307,000 beef cows, with a total value of cattle and calves at \$1.45 billion;
- There are about 1,650 dairy farms in Ohio, with an economic impact of \$2.35 billion;
- Ohio raises more than 2.95 million hogs each year, with an economic impact of \$576.8 million; and
- Ohio is the second largest egg farming state in the nation, producing 9.5 billion eggs a year, with an economic impact of \$3.3 billion.

Senate Bill 52 provides for local vetoes of solar and wind energy projects, which similar to agriculture is of statewide importance. Consequently, it infringes upon the private property rights of farmers throughout the state that desire to use their private property for renewable energy in addition to agricultural operations.

Ohio's beef, dairy, pork and poultry farmers strongly support personal property rights. We understand and can appreciate the concerns of neighbors regarding impacts to their own properties caused by the development of wind or solar projects; however, Ohio's Power Siting Board is equipped to address those concerns. We could support amendments to the Power Siting Board process that improves notice and provides for additional input, but S.B. 52 as currently constituted goes too far. We understand that there are additional amendments that will be made to the bill, and we appreciate the sponsors willingness to hear the concerns of many affected parties. We look forward to working the sponsors further in the House to make this bill better for farmers in Ohio.

Many farmers often lease portions of their land to solar and wind developers, using the lease payments to supplement income, which helps farmers withstand the year-to-year turbulence in the agricultural commodity markets. The stable incomes enable farmers to better plan for equipment purchases, expansion of operations, and keep their land in agricultural use, as opposed to leasing land to a commercial or residential developer.

Thank you for all you do to support Ohio's agricultural community. As currently proposed, the Ohio Cattlemen's Association, Ohio Dairy Producers Association, Ohio Pork Council, and Ohio Poultry Association oppose S.B. 52 and ask the legislature to explore other possible reforms to the Power Siting Board process that preserves Ohioans' personal property rights.

