

# Zachary Kyle West

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## Opponent Testimony on Substitute House Bill 114 Ohio Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

June 20, 2018

Chairman Balderson, Vice Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member O'Brien and members of the Committee, I am writing to express my objection to any revision of the setbacks for industrial wind turbines that would measure the distance from a home rather than a property line. I also object to any proposed reduction of the current 1,125-foot minimum setback measurement distance from the property line.

I deeply regret that I am not able to provide this testimony in person before the committee and stand with my neighbors from Seneca County and all those affected by this proposed legislation throughout the great State of Ohio. I am a licensed physician and my obligations to my patients have unfortunately prevented me from being present in person. However, my strong feelings on this issue have not prevented me from doing everything I can to assist my friends, neighbors, and patients who would be affected by the proposed changes in Ohio law.

I was only made aware, like many, of the proposed industrial wind projects in Seneca County once the proposals were filed with the Ohio Power Siting Board and my neighbors approached me with their growing concerns. I currently do not own property nor does my immediate family own property that will be directly impacted by an industrial wind project. As a physician, I am trained to read, research, and thoroughly investigate an issue before rendering an opinion. I applied this same approach with regards to the industrial wind projects proposed for Seneca County. Though I may not currently be directly impacted by any wind project, after witnessing the growing rife and animosity it has created in my community (even before any wind turbine has been constructed) I felt deeply compelled to take a stance on this issue.

I have found that one of the most contentious matters surrounding any industrial wind project involves the minimum setback distances. I firmly believe that the minimum setback changes put into place by the Ohio General Assembly in 2014 are appropriate and a fair compromise. While there is much debate on either side of the issue to lengthen or shorten the current minimum setback distance, the current 1,125 feet measurement from blade tip to the property line is appropriate. Measuring from the property line allows for a neighbor in favor of a wind turbine to utilize his or her property as they so choose while keeping their decisions confined within the bounds of their own property. The changes in the proposed Substitute House Bill 114 would allow further encroaching on the property of a neighbor who is not in favor of a wind turbine.

Any industrial wind project will dramatically change the character of the affected community. Yet every Ohio community will have a difference of opinions and priorities that factor into a decision of whether or not to pursue an industrial wind project. A growing list of concerns that ultimately factor into these decisions includes nuisance effects (audio, visual, light, flicker, noise, shadow, vibration, air turbulence, wake, electromagnetic, electrical, radio frequency interference, etc.), safety issues (ice throw, air ambulance disturbance, turbine fires, etc.) and property impacts (devaluation, trespass zoning, etc.). The greatest impact of any industrial wind project is on those within and immediately outside a project

footprint. I believe we must permit greater control and input at the community level with regards to industrial wind turbines. One measure that should be considered involves allowing township zoning to regulate industrial wind projects. A local vote at the township level in the unincorporated areas would allow for the greatest input by those who are most affected in an industrial wind project. What ultimately impacts one Ohio community will not be the same in another Ohio community. The costs and benefits must be weighed by those in a community who are most impacted when rendering a decision of whether an industrial wind project should be constructed. If any decision is made on the matter of industrial wind turbines, please permit greater local control than what is currently allowed under Ohio law.

I thank you for taking the time to read my testimony in opposition to current proposed Substitute House Bill 114.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zachary West".

Zachary K. West, DO, MPH  
Tiffin, Ohio