



Opponent Testimony of Tom Bullock on Ohio House Bill 401
Ohio Representative, Chambers for Innovation and Clean Energy
Ohio House Energy and Natural Resources, Chair Nino Vitale
December 3, 2019

Chair Vitale, Vice Chair Kick, Ranking Member Denson, and members of the Ohio House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer opponent testimony on House Bill 401. My name is Tom Bullock and I am the Ohio Representative for the Chambers for Innovation and Clean Energy (CICE), is a nationwide network of local chambers from every state in the nation. We help local chambers of commerce and their member companies navigate and prosper in the clean energy space.

Founded by local chamber executives, CICE's Advisory Council is comprised of chamber CEOs and senior staff. We are one of the largest local chamber organizations in the country, with 1,200 chambers in our network representing some 900,000 businesses. In Ohio, we have nearly 300 chambers representing more than 70,000 businesses.

Local chambers of commerce and economic development organizations are at the forefront of advocating for the economic growth of our communities, and in the era of cost-competitive, global competition, we recognize that energy is an increasingly important issue for our local businesses.

HB 401 is a troubling proposal that would single out wind energy development for local referenda that could result in cancellation of a project *after* permitting. This would impede property rights, worsen red tape, and impose a chilling effect that would likely deter wind energy development in Ohio.

Other energy industries, including natural gas, coal, and nuclear power, do not face similar obstacles, nor do other forms of non-energy development. This double standard makes poor economic policy and should not become law.

Chambers, economic development officials, and community leaders, have seen or anticipate significant benefits from renewable clean energy projects to our businesses, schools, communities, and the economy. We have also seen how energy efficiency improvements to buildings and facilities have saved funds and made businesses more competitive.

Ohio needs to take full advantage of the fast-growing clean energy sector that's delivered more than 112,000 new jobs and billions in investment to our state. Additionally, access to renewable energy is often a top site selection priority for Fortune 100 and 500 companies.

With this in mind, Ohio must adopt a clear and consistent roadmap to encourage renewable clean energy development, not impose roadblocks or burdensome development regulations.

That is why House Bill 401 should not be adopted in its current form. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition.