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Good morning, Chairman Wilson and Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee. I'm here today to speak a bill that has been around, in one form or another, for the last two General Assemblies. Senate Bill 234 some of you may already be familiar with, but it grants local citizens the ability to reject wind projects by use of a local referendum.

This bill has come forth because of a grassroots effort by many constituents in the areas most affected by wind turbines. Due to the way the Ohio Power Siting board process works, these constituents feel they have no say in the instruction of these wind projects that will drastically affect their landscape and potentially have a major negative impact on their home values. Typically in these townships there is a local zoning authority that can regulate the type of activity or type of development, lot size, or height of buildings. In keeping with how transformative these wind projects are from a land use perspective, it makes sense that something like this should be subject to the same authority that any other projects that have a similar scope and magnitude would be subject to. Current law, rather, allows all these decisions to be made by the Ohio Power Siting Board. However, the Ohio Revised Code section number 4906.13 does not allow local zoning authority to regulate whether these wind projects can be placed in their zoning authorities' community or even how many turbines may be placed or the size and characteristics of the turbines.

Wind projects need to be subject to more local control than that of other energy projects because these wind projects can be spread across tens of thousands of acres, and as stated previously are far more transformative than say a solar farm or natural gas project. The intent of this legislation is not to thwart wind development, or the development of renewable energy in Ohio at all. Rather, Senate Bill 234 aims to allow local citizens to decide what is best for their community instead of leaving that decision to unelected bureaucrats in Columbus.

I'd like to thank the members of Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee for allowing me to testify today. At this time, I'd be happy to answer any questions the committee members may have.