



**Before the Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee  
Opponent Testimony on Senate Bill 234  
February 11th, 2019**

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, my name is Stephanie Kromer, and I am the Director of Energy and Environmental Policy for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to offer opponent testimony on Senate Bill 234.

The Ohio Chamber is the state's leading business advocate, and we represent nearly 8,000 companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

Senate Bill 234 would permit a local referendum on wind energy projects after they've received Ohio Power Siting Board certification – and even after construction has begun. No other generation source is subject to a similar public referendum, and such a requirement would kill almost every wind project moving forward in the state. This represents a dangerous precedent and reverses the regulatory certainty developers and investors rely on to make business decisions and investments in Ohio.

During the spring, a similar amendment was inserted into another bill but was removed before the bill was voted out of committee. At the time, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce urged removal of this provision because, once a wind project has been approved by the Ohio Power Siting Board, the wind developer has already invested millions of dollars on impact studies, certifications and other pre-development requirements. It would be unreasonable to subject a project to a local referendum this late in the game.

Proposals such as SB 234 do not create a friendlier business climate in Ohio. In fact, they do just the opposite. If passed, this bill would make it less likely wind developers would ever consider doing business in the state, depriving Ohio of economic development opportunities that could generate millions of dollars of tax revenue, create both construction and long-term jobs and contribute to diversifying our economy. If lawmakers believe local residents should have a stronger voice in the process, a more balanced approach is needed. For these reasons, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce opposes SB 234.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today, and I will be happy to answer any questions from the committee.