

Dear Members of the Energy and Public Utilities Committee,

I am writing today to ask you to pass SB52. Please give our Ohio communities a voice in where industrial solar and wind plants are placed.

Currently, although counties have invested time and money into putting land-use plans into place, they have no voice in where these projects are placed. Please pass this bill to give the county and local officials (our chosen representation) the opportunity to endeavor to carry out the will of the residents in these communities. It is unreasonable that in order to have a voice, our community leaders must pay hefty legal fees, financed with tax payer dollars, just to participate in the OPSB judicial proceedings.

Each community is unique, and each has resources that need to be protected including agricultural resources such as farmland, natural resources such as parks and wildlife habitats, and cultural assets as well. Please let residents and community leaders be heard when outside, multimillion-dollar companies want to usurp the use of our community for commercial use.

Farmland throughout the U.S. is shrinking each year. And in Ohio, there are several utility-scale wind and solar projects in the pipeline, poised to swallow up even more. It is imperative that SB52 be passed quickly to give our elected officials and leaders in the community a voice to weigh in where industrial projects are placed.

Respectfully,
Jean Weyandt