

I would like to enthusiastically endorse the construction of the Seneca Wind project, 18-0488-EL-BGN, in Seneca County, especially in Bloom Township.

I retired in 2015 after 35 years teaching art and technology for the Seneca East Local School District. I was able to do a lot of wonderful projects with my students, but over the years, there were things we could not afford because our school did not have the budget for it. I remember feeling jealous of my friends who taught in districts like Oak Harbor and Marysville that were anchored by major economic development projects. When I saw the level of resources those districts had, I hoped that Seneca East could someday land a major business that could support our district in the same way.

With major economic developments missing from the Seneca East School District, my next hope for additional operating funds was from the Ohio Supreme Court, DeRolph decision that might provide additional funds as the other property-rich school districts received.

As reported in the Toledo Blade Newspaper: ***It has been over two decades since the Ohio Supreme Court issued its first 4-3 decision — now known as the first DeRolph decision — in a landmark case brought on behalf of a public school student in Perry County. It found that the state’s method of funding education at the time fell short of meeting the constitutional mandate of providing a “thorough and efficient” system of education for 600-plus districts. It found the system placed students in property-poor districts at a competitive disadvantage compared to their counterparts in wealthier districts. The court later reaffirmed that decision twice and then surrendered jurisdiction in 2003.*** (Provance, "School funding disparity remains 20 years after landmark DeRolph decision", 2018)

Our legislators failed at providing a fair formula to help provide equitable funds to property-poor school districts in Ohio.

The general public had no idea of the situations I faced while teaching at Seneca East, with a lack of sufficient funds. I have included a few examples. From 1980-2007, when I was the secondary art specialist for the Seneca East School system. My junior high classroom was not handicapped accessible. There were at least two physically challenged students who were not able to attend class in the art room. There was one elevator installed in the Republic school building but there was not enough money to install another chair lift to reach the art room or relocate my classroom. In Attica, Ohio, where the Seneca

East High School was located, my high school art classroom did not have a water source. The high school students needed to travel a distance to retrieve water for their art projects. A community member generously donated a pottery kiln for student use, however, the school district could not afford to run a 220-volt power line to the art room necessary for the operation of the pottery kiln. Consequently, the pottery kiln sat idle in another room covered with a tablecloth. I do not know of any other art teacher, at other school districts, who faced similar situations.

In 2008, the new Seneca East K-12 School was ready for student use. The new art classroom was handicapped accessible, there were sinks with water in the classroom, and a brand new pottery kiln was wired and ready for use. This project would not have been constructed if only local money was used to construct the new school building. The Ohio School Facilities financed 68% of the total cost of the new school campus, while a local bond issue paid for the remaining 32%. A new school building is not a substitute for sufficient funds to operate the school system. Rural school systems cannot financially operate with only local funding, that is why the funds received from the Seneca Wind Project will be needed and welcomed.

We now have the chance to improve school funding with the prospect of wind energy projects bringing hundreds of thousands of dollars to our district each year. Living as we do in a rural area, we do not have the advantages urban centers have with large businesses or factories - but we can strengthen and diversify our economy by attracting renewable energy developments. When I see a large energy tower - as I often did growing up near Niagara Falls - I don't view it as an eyesore; I see economic opportunity.

I am thrilled that the Seneca East School District and Buckeye Central School District may be able to reap the financial benefits of the Seneca Wind Project!

Concern has been voiced about wind turbines and their proximity to school buildings. There are approximately four school districts that have wind turbines **adjacent** to their school buildings (Bellevue School District, Wynford School District, Huron School District, and Ontario School District). These wind turbines are providing clean, renewable energy to their buildings.

I grew up in Tonawanda, New York, not too far from Lockport, New York. I recently read an article in The Lockport Sun and Journal Newspaper, about the benefits of the wind turbines. Here is an excerpt from that article:

Bill Burke does not see what the uproar over wind turbines is about. A landowner in Lewis County's Tug Hill region — famous for its astounding snow accumulations— Burke has lived near the 195-turbine

Maple Ridge Wind Project since January 2006. Seven turbines are sited on his 600 acres, split between the towns of Lowville and Harrisburg.

So far, he's seen few of the negative impacts — noise, vibrations — that wind project opponents often reference. But he's seen plenty of positives: new jobs, lease payments, and lower tax bills thanks to revenue from the developers, EDP Renewables, LLC and Avangrid Renewables.

"It's been nothing but a positive experience," said Burke, a former dairy farmer, and Lewis County legislator. "We have 35 well-paying jobs out of the deal, and they'll all local. The school and township and county all benefited greatly from it. It's just worked out well. The landowners are compensated well."(Fenster, "In the shadow of giants: 'Big Wind' has its share of supporters in upstate", 2018)

The following statements were published in the Niagara Gazette, about Wind projects in Western New York:

The Sierra Club of Western New York endorsed the proposed Apex industrial wind turbine project in Niagara and Orleans counties.

"The Apex wind project is exactly what Western New Yorkers need to harness the power of community benefits through strong, local, renewable power," Kate Bartholomew, Atlantic chapter chair, said in a statement.

Apex Clean Energy has spent two years studying birds and bats in the project area, and determined the birds' deaths caused by the wind turbines would be no greater than the average for wind projects.

She added that over 250 studies have been done on wind turbines' effects on birds, and concluded that turbines kill far fewer birds than fossil fuel extraction, tall buildings or even outdoor cats.

"The damage to the area fish, bird, bat, and other wildlife populations will be far greater if Climate Disruption continues," Bartholomew said in a follow-up statement. "When facing mass extinctions as opposed to relatively small losses of individuals, I believe the choice is clear."

"Frankly, ten cats and a couple skyscrapers could do more damage to bird populations," she added. (Fenster, "Sierra Club says it supports Lighthouse Wind turbine project", 2018)

The Buffalo News, published the views of the Conservative Committee of the local Adirondack Mountain Club, who unanimously endorsed Apex Clean Energy's Lighthouse Wind turbine project at Somerset on Lake Ontario.

The Conservation Committee likes the project because it will, partially, replace the mammoth 675-megawatt, coal-fired Somerset electrical power plant.

ADK has worked for years to close or clean up coal-burning power plants like Somerset. The acid rain that their smokestacks poured into Adirondack lakes rendered most of those forest lakes sadly lifeless.

In 2010, the Clean Air Task Force commissioned a study of the health cost of fine particle pollution from the then-existing 500 U.S. coal-burning electric plants. They used the same research methods that the EPA uses in its rule-making. The study indicated that these coal-burning plants caused 13,200 unnecessary deaths, 9,700 hospitalizations, and more than 20,000 heart attacks a year. Projecting those figures on to Somerset, that plant alone would be responsible for 11 preventable deaths a year, 19 heart attacks and 170 asthma attacks, presumably mostly in Somerset.

Besides these deadly fine particles and lake-killing acid rain, the Somerset plant was responsible for pouring 3.8 million tons of climate-disrupting greenhouse gas into the atmosphere.

The Lighthouse Wind project proposes to pay the affected Niagara County municipalities \$1.5 million in lieu of taxes and the wind turbines will bring substantial leasing fees to individuals willing to host them on their property.

ADK was admittedly concerned when we read warnings that the projected turbine sites for the Lighthouse project included heavily trafficked migratory bird pathways. We think of ourselves as defenders of wildlife as well as wildlands, fresh air, and clean water. So we looked carefully at the Apex Corp.'s posting of slides and a verbatim account of their Oct. 2, 2018, presentation in Lyndonville. This is a readable, well-illustrated and detailed account of their study of and proposed methods of dealing with the environmental consequences of siting windmills at Somerset.

ADK is well satisfied that the Lighthouse wind turbines will not disrupt the population of birds residing in or migrating through Somerset.

(Beahan, "Another Voice: Adirondack Mountain Club chapter supports Lighthouse Wind", 2019)

We are so fortunate to have the acreage available in our area to construct wind turbines. Yet even in populated areas, these turbines gracefully nestle in with the landscape. A wonderful example is The North Findlay Wind campus in Findlay, Ohio. Six Wind turbines power 30% of the Whirlpool and Ball corporations. Three more turbines will be built in the Spring of 2019. (WILIN, "Progress: Findlay industry on the grow", 2019) These turbines are located near the center of town and a middle school.

During my career, I was involved with negotiating wage raises. I was reminded by others that the field of education was not a profession with high pay. I have always looked for ways to supplement our family income. Purchasing land and signing a land agreement with Seneca Wind offered a chance to do that. As of today, it looks like our property may not qualify for a turbine after all. That would be disappointing, but I support Seneca Wind and other local wind projects all the same. I want my rights as a property owner protected too.

There has been very little economic growth in this area of Seneca County. Our Bloom Township employees no longer have health insurance with the Township due to lack of funds. With the construction of the wind turbines, our country will benefit from clean, renewable energy, our schools, townships, and libraries will greatly benefit from the revenue generated by this great project.

In 2008, I received my Master of Education degree from Bowling Green State University in the field of Classroom Technology. It is extremely important when instructing students to accurately use the internet when doing research. While much information is easily available on the internet we must only rely on scientific peer-reviewed data. I urge people to use caution when using unsubstantiated information found with a Google search, on Wikipedia, YouTube, or from a Facebook friend. This type of information has created hysteria. Cell towers would never be erected on someone's property or located by a residence if this type of information was to be believed.

I look forward to the construction of the wind turbines that will provide clean renewable energy and economic growth for me and my neighbors.

Anne Fry
Bloom Township

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