

BEFORE THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

- - -

In the Matter of the :  
Application of Big Plain :  
Solar, LLC, for a :  
Certificate of :  
Environmental :  
Compatibility and Public : Case No. 19-1823-EL-BGN  
Need to Construct a :  
Solar-Powered Electric :  
Generation Facility in :  
Madison County, Ohio. :

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PROCEEDINGS

before Mr. Matthew Sandor and Ms. Patricia Schabo,  
Administrative Law Judges, at the Ohio Power Siting  
Board, via Webex, called at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday,  
January 6, 2021.

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ARMSTRONG & OKEY, INC.  
222 East Town Street, Second Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-5201  
(614) 224-9481 - (800) 223-9481

- - -

1 APPEARANCES:

2 Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, LLP  
3 By Mr. Michael Settineri  
4 52 East Gay Street  
5 Columbus, Ohio 43215

6 On behalf of the Applicant.

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Wednesday Evening Session,  
January 6, 2021.

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ALJ SCHABO: Good evening and welcome, everyone. My name is Patricia Schabo, and with me is Matthew Sandor. We are the Administrative Law Judges in the Legal Department of the Ohio Power Siting Board. I have been assigned by the Board to this proceeding which is Case No. 19-1823-EL-BGN.

One of our duties as the assigned Administrative Law Judges is conducting a public hearing in this case which involves the application filed by Big Plain Solar, LLC, for a Certificate to Construct a Solar-Powered Gen -- Electric Generation Facility in Madison County, Ohio.

Due to the COVID-19 emergency that remains in affect under Executive Order No. 2020-01D issued by the Governor of Ohio in March 2020, today's hearing is being held through Webex which enables interested persons to offer testimony on the proposed project by telephone or via -- or video via the internet. The hearing is also being live streamed at [www.youtube.com/user/pucohio](http://www.youtube.com/user/pucohio).

Before we get started with the public hearing, I would like to address some preliminary

1 issues. First, if you experience technical  
2 difficulties during the hearing, there are several  
3 options to address the issue. If your internet  
4 connection drops at any point, you can try to join  
5 Webex again by video, or you can participate by  
6 phone. If those options are unsuccessful, please  
7 call the Board's Legal Department at (614) 466-6843  
8 immediately for assistance.

9 Finally, if you mainly wish to listen to  
10 the hearing, you can use your phone instead of  
11 accessing via Webex on the internet. You can view  
12 the live stream on the YouTube channel, or you can  
13 listen to the hearing by dialing 1-408-418-9388 and  
14 entering the meeting No. 1733714980.

15 For more information about the Webex  
16 technical help options, you can obtain this through  
17 the chat feature which will be available throughout  
18 the hearing. You may click on the chat button at any  
19 time to obtain technical assistance or to ask  
20 procedural questions during the hearing. The chat  
21 feature should not be used for any other purpose such  
22 as to offer comments about the proposed project that  
23 is the subject of today's hearing. Please be aware  
24 that the chats are recorded and should not be  
25 considered private. Chats are also not part of the

1 official record in this case.

2 As indicated by the entry of October 14,  
3 2020, witnesses were to register to testify.

4 Individuals who have registered to provide testimony  
5 should be ready to speak when we read their names  
6 from the registration list. Individuals who are  
7 commenting by video will be unmuted by Board staff  
8 when it is time for their testimony. If you are  
9 providing your testimony via telephone, a Board staff  
10 member will call you at the phone number you provided  
11 when it is your turn to testify.

12 Please bear with us as we work to queue  
13 up each individual which may take some time. It may  
14 also divert our attention at times from what is  
15 happening in the hearing. If this happens, please be  
16 patient and know that we are working to ensure that  
17 everyone has the opportunity to participate today.

18 Consistent with the entry of October 14,  
19 2020, we ask that you keep your testimony to 5  
20 minutes in length and avoid repetitive comments. To  
21 avoid unnecessary background noise, we ask that you  
22 keep your microphone on mute unless you are  
23 commenting. Again, if you have any questions about  
24 this process as the hearing proceeds, please use the  
25 chat function.

1                   Are there any questions before we  
2                   officially get started with today's proceeding?

3                   Okay. If not, we will begin with the  
4                   formal proceeding. Judge Sandor.

5                   ALJ SANDOR: Thank you. The Ohio Power  
6                   Siting Board has scheduled for hearing at this time  
7                   and place Case No. 19-1823-EL-BGN which is captioned  
8                   in the Matter of the Application of Big Plain Solar,  
9                   LLC, for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility  
10                  and Public Need to Construct a Solar-Powered Electric  
11                  Generation Facility in Madison County, Ohio.

12                  As mentioned earlier, my name is Matt  
13                  Sandor, and with me is Patricia Schabo. We are  
14                  Administrative Law Judges in the Board's Legal  
15                  Department, and we will be conducting today's  
16                  hearing.

17                  In addition to Administrative Law Judge  
18                  Schabo and myself, there are other staff members from  
19                  the Board assisting with various aspects of the  
20                  hearing including Micah Schmidt, Mary Fischer, Jill  
21                  Coker, Matt Butler, Anna Perry, and Aubrey Barker who  
22                  will be overseeing the event on Webex and YouTube.

23                  At this time we'll take the appearances  
24                  by the counsel of the parties of this case. We will  
25                  begin with the Applicant.

MR. SETTINERI: Yes, good evening, your Honors. On behalf of Big Plain Solar, LLC, Mike Settineri with the law firm of Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, LLP, 52 East Gay Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. Thank you.

ALJ SANDOR: Thank you. We have two Intervenorors in this case. First, the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. Hearing none. And Thomas A. Coughlin and TDC Farms, LLC. Hearing none. And Board Staff. Hearing none as well. I'll note that while counsel for Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, Thomas A. Coughlin and TDC Farms, LLC, and Board Staff may not be participating in this proceeding, non-counsel representatives of these entities may be attending.

The subject of today's hearing is an application filed by Big Plain Solar, LLC, for the purpose of constructing and operating the solar-powered electric generation facility. Specifically the proposed project would occupy approximately 1,200 acres within a 2,438 acre project area in Fairfield and Oak Run Townships in Madison County. The project will generate 196 megawatts.

Big Plain Solar's application was filed on April 27, 2020, and was supplemented on May 28 and June 22, 2020. I would also note that the Board's



Staff filed a Report of Investigation on December 22, 2020. This report is a recommendation from -- from the Board's Staff and does not necessarily reflect what the Board's final determination in this case will be.

The purpose of today's public hearing is to receive testimony regarding Big Plain Solar's application from entities and persons in the local community who are affected by the proposed project but who are not parties to the case.

The public -- the public hearing is not a question and answer session but is an opportunity to let the Board know what you think about the proposed project. Today's public hearing is only one aspect of the process in this case. An evidentiary hearing is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, January 19, 2021, through Webex. The purpose of the evidentiary hearing is for the parties in this case, including the Applicant, the Intervenor, and Board Staff to provide testimony and other evidence regarding the project.

Tonight's hearing is being transcribed by a court reporter, Karen Gibson from Armstrong & Okey. If you plan to testify, please speak clearly so that the court reporter can accurately reflect your

1 comments on the record. Please make sure that you  
2 verbally respond to all questions asked in order that  
3 they can be properly transcribed.

4 After I finish with this introduction, I  
5 will begin by calling individuals on the registration  
6 list to testify about the proposed project. Each  
7 person who registered to testify will be permitted to  
8 speak once about the project. We will ask you to  
9 take an oath or affirmation that what you are about  
10 to say is the truth. Your testimony will then be  
11 considered as part of the official record in this  
12 case, and it will be reviewed by the Board before a  
13 final decision is made on the application.

14 Additionally, counsel for the parties in  
15 this case as well as Judge Schabo and myself will be  
16 permitted to ask you questions about your testimony.  
17 Should you decide that you do not want to testify  
18 when I call your name from the registration list, you  
19 can pass to the next witness. Also once you have  
20 finished testifying or if you are here merely to  
21 observe, you may leave the hearing at any time that  
22 you wish.

23 If individuals wish to supplement their  
24 testimony with an exhibit for the Board's  
25 consideration, a copy of the document along with a

reference to Case No. 19-1823-EL-BGN must be provided to the Board no later than January 12, 2021, by electronic mail to [contactopsb@puco.ohio.gov](mailto:contactopsb@puco.ohio.gov) or by mail to Ohio Power Siting Board, 180 East Broad Street, Attention: Docketing Division, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

For those of you not testifying who wish to file a public comment regarding the proposed project can do so in writing on the Board's website by electronic mail at [contactopsb@puco.ohio.gov](mailto:contactopsb@puco.ohio.gov) or by mail to Ohio Power Siting Board, 180 East Broad Street, Attention: Docketing Division, Columbus, Ohio 43215. Written comments should reference Case No. 19-1823-EL-BGN.

The Board appreciates your participation in tonight's hearing, and we want everyone who is registered to testify to have the opportunity to do so.

At this time we are going to begin with the testimony. Both Judge Schabo and myself apologize in advance if we mispronounce your name, but we will be trying our best to get it right.

So I believe our first witness is Brian Dicken. Can the host please promote the witness to a panelist role.

1 MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Dicken has been  
2 promoted. Please enable your audio and video.

3 ALJ SANDOR: Mr. Dicken.

4 MR. DICKEN: Good evening.

5 ALJ SANDOR: Good evening. Please raise  
6 your right hand.

7 (Witness sworn.)

8 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your  
9 name for the record.

10 MR. DICKEN: Brian Dicken, B-R-I-A-N  
11 D-I-C-K-E-N.

12 ALJ SANDOR: Please provide your address  
13 including the township.

14 MR. DICKEN: 300 Madison Avenue, Suite  
15 200, Toledo, Ohio 43604.

16 ALJ SANDOR: Do you work or reside within  
17 the project area?

18 MR. DICKEN: No.

19 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. Please proceed.

20 MR. DICKEN: Good evening, your Honors.  
21 I will keep this brief, but I would just like to  
22 express my support for the Big Plain solar project.  
23 I feel that this is something that will not only  
24 benefit the residents, the schools, and others within  
25 Madison County but really help to support economic

1 development in businesses across Ohio as many of  
2 these components will be built here in Ohio and will  
3 directly impact the overall well-being.

4 So I would encourage the Board to approve  
5 the application and allow this project to go forward.  
6 Thank you.

7 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions for this  
8 witness from counsel or the Bench? No?

9 ALJ SCHABO: No.

10 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you for your  
11 testimony. You are excused.

12 MR. DICKEN: Thank you.

13 ALJ SANDOR: Our next witness is John  
14 Andrix. Can the host please promote Mr. Andrix to a  
15 panelist role.

16 MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Andrix, you have been  
17 promoted. Please enable your audio and your video.

18 ALJ SANDOR: All right. Please raise  
19 your right hand.

20 (Witness sworn.)

21 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your  
22 name for the record.

23 MR. ANDRIX: John Andrix, J-O-H-N  
24 A-N-D-R-I-X.

25 ALJ SANDOR: Please provide your address

1 including the township.

2 MR. ANDRIX: My address is 620 Eaton  
3 Street, city of London, Ohio.

4 ALJ SANDOR: Do you work or reside within  
5 the project area?

6 MR. ANDRIX: I own land and have a farm.

7 ALJ SANDOR: Is that within the project  
8 area?

9 MR. ANDRIX: Yes.

10 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. Please proceed with  
11 your testimony.

12 MR. ANDRIX: I'm 73 years old. I was  
13 born and raised in Fairfield Township, and over the  
14 years we have had to -- the tax burden has been borne  
15 by the homeowners and farmers of Fairfield and Oak  
16 Run Township. We have no industry.

17 And one positive note about this project  
18 it will provide additional funding for the Madison  
19 Plains School District. Madison Plains is one of the  
20 largest rural school districts in the state of Ohio.  
21 They have a unique -- a very high transportation  
22 expense due to all their students have to be  
23 transported by bus, some of them over 20 miles to the  
24 school facility. Also we know the demands of  
25 education and the extra burden of the COVID outbreak.

1 I think the future is in renewable energy  
2 as the United States moves away from the internal  
3 combustion engine for personal transportation, moving  
4 more towards electric vehicles that require  
5 electricity. We've generated much of our electricity  
6 in the past using fossil fuels, and we have evidence  
7 that those fuels do damage our environment.

8 So solar energy is quiet. It's -- does  
9 not damage the environment. And once the project is  
10 finished, the land can be returned easily to  
11 agricultural production.

12 This project will provide income for the  
13 schools, jobs, permanent help -- permanent jobs in  
14 the project, and my conclusion is the project will  
15 benefit the people of Madison County and the state of  
16 Ohio and the environment within our areas.

17 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions for this  
18 witness from counsel or the Bench?

19 MR. SETTINERI: No, your Honor. Thank  
20 you.

21 ALJ SANDOR: No. Thank you, Mr. Andrix.  
22 Good night. Have a good evening.

23 Our next witness is Rob Slane. Can the  
24 host please promote Mr. Slane to a panelist role.

25 MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Slane, you've been

1 promoted. Please unmute your microphone and enable  
2 your video.

3 MR. SLANE: Good evening, everyone.

4 ALJ SANDOR: Good evening. Could you --  
5 right now we can only hear you, Mr. Slane. Can you  
6 enable your video? Take your time. I will give you  
7 a few moments.

8 MR. SLANE: I guess I am having a little  
9 technical difficulty. There we go.

10 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. There we can. We can  
11 see you now. All right. Please raise your right  
12 hand.

13 (Witness sworn.)

14 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your  
15 name for the record.

16 MR. SLANE: My name is Rob Slane, R-O-B  
17 S-L-A-N-E, and I am the County Administrator  
18 representing the Board of County Commissioners in  
19 Madison County.

20 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. Please provide your  
21 address including the township.

22 MR. SLANE: Do you want our work address  
23 or personal address?

24 ALJ SANDOR: Your work address is fine.

25 MR. SLANE: That would be 1 North Main



1 Street, London, Ohio.

2 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. And --

3 MR. SLANE: It's Union Township.

4 ALJ SANDOR: Union Township. And do you  
5 work or reside within the project area?

6 MR. SLANE: I do.

7 ALJ SANDOR: Work within the project  
8 area?

9 MR. SLANE: I do work.

10 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. Please proceed with  
11 your testimony.

12 MR. SLANE: Well, good evening and thank  
13 you for allowing me to speak this evening. I'm here,  
14 as I mentioned, as a representative of the Board of  
15 County Commissioners for Madison County.

16 Again, I am the County Administrator, and  
17 so I've had the pleasure of working with Big Solar  
18 since -- for a couple years now, and I would have to  
19 say the Company, they went out of their way in being  
20 transparent, forthcoming with information, and  
21 overall pleasure to work with.

22 From our standpoint, and again, that's  
23 Madison County Board of County Commissioners, we are  
24 very -- very excited about this project and  
25 100 percent supportive of this project. We feel the

1 economic impact of the local government in the area  
 2 will be significant, and the impact of the local  
 3 school district, Madison Plains Local School  
 4 District, is very significant. They are a school  
 5 district that has extremely limited opportunities for  
 6 any additional revenue. It's mostly agricultural  
 7 area. So other than a levy which further financially  
 8 burdens the property owners there, this is one of the  
 9 few opportunities that they would have to -- to boost  
 10 that revenue.

11 So with that said, I will keep it short  
 12 and sweet; but, again, as the local government here,  
 13 fully supportive of the project, and we hope it moves  
 14 forward with due haste. Thank you.

15 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you. Any questions  
 16 from counsel or the Bench?

17 Hearing none, thank you for your  
 18 testimony. You are excused.

19 Our next witness is Patrick Hook. Can  
 20 the host please promote Mr. Hook to a panelist role.

21 MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Hook, you've been  
 22 promoted. Please enable your audio and video.

23 MR. HOOK: Hello.

24 ALJ SANDOR: Hey there. Please raise  
 25 your right hand.

1                   There you go. There's a bit of a lag but  
2 I see it now.

3                   (Witness sworn.)

4                   ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your  
5 name for the record.

6                   MR. HOOK: Patrick Hook, P-A-T-R-I-C-K  
7 H-O-O-K.

8                   ALJ SANDOR: Please provide your address  
9 including the township.

10                  MR. HOOK: 1502 Glenn Avenue, Columbus,  
11 Ohio. That's in Franklin County, Franklin County.

12                  ALJ SANDOR: Do you work or reside within  
13 the project area?

14                  MR. HOOK: No.

15                  ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed.

16                  MR. HOOK: Thank you for allowing me this  
17 opportunity to speak this evening. Hope everyone and  
18 their families are doing well during these strange  
19 and scary times.

20                  My name is Patrick Hook, and I am a  
21 member and business representative of the  
22 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 683.  
23 Local 683 represents electrical workers that live and  
24 work in the central Ohio area including the proposed  
25 Big Plain Solar site in Madison County.

1           IBEW 683 strongly supports the approval  
2 of this project. Approval of this project will be  
3 beneficial to the residents of Ohio in many ways,  
4 jobs for local residents, increase in tax revenue to  
5 local schools and municipalities, increase in  
6 pollution created from other sources of power  
7 generation, availability of clean energy for business  
8 in Ohio, the availability of clean energy for the  
9 residents of Ohio, and diversity of energy generation  
10 in Ohio. Thank you.

11           ALJ SANDOR: Any questions from counsel  
12 or the Bench?

13           ALJ SCHABO: No, thank you.

14           ALJ SANDOR: Hearing none, thank you for  
15 your testimony. You are excused.

16           Now Judge Schabo.

17           ALJ SCHABO: All right. Thank you, Judge  
18 Sandor. Our next witness is Nathan Collins.

19           MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Collins, you have been  
20 promoted. Please enable your audio and video.

21           ALJ SCHABO: You have a green screen.

22           Mr. Schmidt, should we move to the next  
23 witness or just wait a minute?

24           MR. SCHMIDT: Whichever you prefer.  
25 Mr. Collins, if you can contact Matt Butler in the

1 chat, he might --

2 ALJ SCHABO: We'll give Mr. Collins just  
3 another minute. This can be frustrating.

4 MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Collins, I just unmuted  
5 you. Can you say something?

6 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Can you hear me?

7 MR. SCHMIDT: Yes, we can. We still  
8 can't see you, but we can hear you.

9 ALJ SCHABO: Could you say something one  
10 more time so I am sure we have you? Mr. Collins  
11 still appears to be --

12 MR. COLLINS: Okay. There we go. I am  
13 not muted now.

14 ALJ SCHABO: Okay.

15 MR. COLLINS: Can you see me?

16 ALJ SCHABO: I see a black screen. I  
17 don't know if your device has a front and back  
18 camera.

19 MR. COLLINS: Should just be the one.  
20 I'm sorry.

21 ALJ SCHABO: That's okay.

22 MR. COLLINS: How do I go about getting  
23 this screen to pop up where you can see me?

24 ALJ SCHABO: Well, you know what? The  
25 other thing we can do is this, since we do offer

1 testimony by telephone, clearly we are not seeing  
2 people. I am happy to take your testimony as long as  
3 I can hear you. Are you willing to proceed in that  
4 fashion? Mr. Collins, I believe -- oop.

5 MR. COLLINS: Yes. I'll do it if you  
6 can't see me.

7 ALJ SCHABO: Okay.

8 MR. COLLINS: That's okay.

9 ALJ SCHABO: That's okay. I am still  
10 going to ask you to raise your right hand.

11 (Witness sworn.)

12 ALJ SCHABO: Thank you. And if you could  
13 please state and spell your name for the record.

14 MR. COLLINS: My name is Nathan Collins,  
15 N-A-T-H-A-N C-O-L-L-I-N-S.

16 ALJ SCHABO: And could you please provide  
17 your address including the township.

18 MR. COLLINS: It is 9450 Pringle-Benjamin  
19 Road, that's London, Ohio, in Fairfield Township.

20 ALJ SCHABO: And do you reside or work  
21 within the project area?

22 MR. COLLINS: I live in the project area.

23 ALJ SCHABO: All right. Thank you very  
24 much. Proceed with your testimony.

25 MR. COLLINS: All right. First of all, I

1 just want to thank you guys for allowing me the  
2 opportunity to speak tonight. Obviously my name is  
3 Nathan Collins. I live in the Fairfield Township.

4 In addition to being a stakeholder as a  
5 member of the community, I am a member of the  
6 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local  
7 683. My -- my children will attend Madison Plains  
8 School District which this will directly affect them  
9 in the most positive ways by allowing more money to  
10 get to the school system.

11 This project is very personal to me  
12 because it will help my children's school out, and it  
13 will not only help them, but it will help the  
14 infrastructure within the community. It will also  
15 create up to 450 jobs that will directly affect many  
16 members of my community, especially upgrades around  
17 roads and parks.

18 I 100 percent am for this project, and I  
19 think it will be a good thing for our community.  
20 That's all.

21 ALJ SCHABO: Are there any questions from  
22 counsel or the Bench?

23 ALJ SANDOR: No.

24 ALJ SCHABO: All right. Thank you,  
25 Mr. Collins. Have a good evening.

1                   The next witness on my list is Dillon  
2 Follrod.

3                   MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Follrod, you've been  
4 promoted. Please enable your audio and video.

5                   ALJ SCHABO: Thank you. Disappeared. I  
6 can see you.

7                   MR. FOLLROD: Can you hear me?

8                   ALJ SCHABO: I can hear you. Excellent.  
9 If you could raise your right hand.

10                  (Witness sworn.)

11                  ALJ SCHABO: Thank you. If you could  
12 state and spell your name for the record, please.

13                  MR. FOLLROD: My name is Dylan Follrod.  
14 I currently live at 1053 Margate Circle, London,  
15 Ohio, and I do live in the project area and that's  
16 Union Township.

17                  ALJ SCHABO: Thank you. You may proceed  
18 with your testimony.

19                  MR. FOLLROD: So, yeah, thank you for  
20 giving me the opportunity to participate tonight.  
21 Again, my name is Dylan Follrod.

22                  Just a little brief background info, my  
23 family has lived in this area for generations. And  
24 actually for the last two and a half years minus the  
25 past two months, I have lived actually on Big Plain



1 Circleville Road in a rental house that was owned by  
2 Mr. Andrix, or is owned by Mr. Andrix. I did not  
3 know he was going to be speaking in this hearing  
4 tonight, so it was nice to see that he is also in  
5 support of the project.

6 I have been involved in the community  
7 here in London for the last six years through various  
8 ways. I am also a member of the International  
9 Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 683,  
10 and I am speaking tonight in support of the Big Plain  
11 solar project.

12 It's estimated the project is going to  
13 bring about 450 jobs to this area. So not only is  
14 that great for the community like many people have  
15 also said, but it also provides great opportunities  
16 for the individuals.

17 For many IBEW men and women in rural Ohio  
18 such as myself, we made great careers and started our  
19 careers in projects like this one. The IBEW, we  
20 pride ourselves in our highly trained and skilled  
21 workers and take pride in our work, and we want to  
22 get the job done right. So, of course, we are going  
23 to be in support of this project.

24 So I want the project to not only create  
25 these 450 jobs, I also want it to create 450

1 opportunities to be part of someone's career path or  
2 start of their career in the electrical industry, so  
3 I also encourage the Board to approve this project.  
4 Thank you very much.

5 ALJ SCHABO: Thank you, Mr. Follrod.  
6 Have a good evening. Oh, wait.

7 Any questions?

8 ALJ SANDOR: No.

9 ALJ SCHABO: Okay. Now you can go ahead  
10 and have a good evening.

11 The next witness I have is a Mr. Ed  
12 Moore.

13 MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Moore, you've been  
14 promoted. Please unmute your audio and enable your  
15 video.

16 ALJ SCHABO: I can see you. Can you say  
17 "hello"?

18 MR. MOORE: Hello. Can you see me?

19 ALJ SCHABO: I can see you, and I can  
20 hear you. Thank you.

21 MR. MOORE: Okay.

22 ALJ SCHABO: Raise your right hand for  
23 me.

24 (Witness sworn.)

25 ALJ SCHABO: Thank you very much. If you

1 could state and spell your name for the record.

2 MR. MOORE: My name is Ed Moore, E-D  
3 M-O-O-R-E.

4 ALJ SCHABO: And if you could provide  
5 your address including the township.

6 MR. MOORE: Yeah. My address is 1655  
7 Rome Corners Road, Galena, Ohio.

8 ALJ SCHABO: And do you live or work in  
9 the project area?

10 MR. MOORE: I do not live there. I have  
11 worked in Madison County in construction sites in  
12 that area.

13 ALJ SCHABO: Okay. Please proceed with  
14 your testimony.

15 MR. MOORE: Good evening. You know, my  
16 name, as I said, is Ed Moore. I am a long-time  
17 member, business manager of the International  
18 Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 683.

19 Over my years of employment, I've worked  
20 in central Ohio including Madison County, as I said.  
21 I've watched the transition from coal generation to  
22 generation with lower or no carbon emissions such as  
23 solar.

24 The Madison County rural area with its  
25 vast farmlands is particularly suited for this area,

1 great for this project. I speak in complete support  
2 for this project, the Big Plains solar project, and  
3 what it will provide. The direct and non-direct jobs  
4 this project will create will have lasting impact on  
5 the area.

6 I know that the IBEW stands ready to  
7 provide the workers necessary to complete this  
8 project in a safe and timely manner. It's also our  
9 intention that, if given the opportunities, these  
10 jobs will become lifelong careers in the electrical  
11 industry, good paying steady jobs with benefits.

12 I thank you for your time this evening  
13 and look forward to working with the Big Plain Solar  
14 and Ohio Siting Board in providing any additional  
15 information I can to ensure this project moves  
16 forward. Thank you.

17 ALJ SCHABO: Thank you, Mr. Moore.

18 Are there any questions from counsel or  
19 the Bench?

20 ALJ SANDOR: No questions.

21 ALJ SCHABO: All right. Thank you.

22 And the last witness on my list is Layne  
23 Toops.

24 MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Toops, you've been  
25 promoted. If you could unmic -- unmute your

1 microphone and enable your video.

2 MS. TOOPS: I hope you are not  
3 disappointed.

4 ALJ SCHABO: Not a bit. Not a bit. We  
5 missed the first part, but I think I know what you  
6 were getting at.

7 MS. TOOPS: No Mr. Toops here. This is  
8 his better half.

9 ALJ SCHABO: Well, in that case it's  
10 doubly important when we get to that point you state  
11 and spell your name for the record. But, first, we  
12 will start by swearing you in.

13 (Witness sworn.)

14 ALJ SCHABO: Okay. If you could spell  
15 and state your name for the record.

16 MS. TOOPS: Layne Toops, L-A-Y-N-E  
17 T-O-O-P-S.

18 ALJ SCHABO: And please provide your  
19 address including the township.

20 MS. TOOPS: 6235 Big Plain Circleville  
21 Road, London, Ohio, Fairfield Township.

22 ALJ SCHABO: Sorry about that. If you  
23 could repeat the township.

24 THE WITNESS: Fairfield.

25 ALJ SCHABO: Thank you. And do you live

1 or work in the project area?

2 MS. TOOPS: Yes.

3 ALJ SCHABO: Okay. Thank you very much.  
4 Please proceed with your testimony.

5 MS. TOOPS: This story is a gas. My  
6 husband and I saved for years to buy our dream home.  
7 We lived in Hilliard in a crowded community in the  
8 suburbs. After I finished college at Ohio State and  
9 moved on to a life in a close-knit community of  
10 Hilliard, which we found rewarding and nice, but  
11 having grown up on a strawberry farm and knowing what  
12 it feels like to grow your own food and to enjoy the  
13 open space, I knew that suburban life was going to be  
14 short lived for us.

15 We saved, we searched, and we found our  
16 dream home in July of 2020 on Big Plain Circleville  
17 Road. The rolling hills of Madison County are  
18 famous. Soybeans, corn, picturesque backgrounds,  
19 beautiful sunshine, beautiful sunsets, you just look  
20 forward to life out here. That's what we were so  
21 eager and anxious to be a part of.

22 Now, the plot we purchased is next to  
23 farmland that has grown corn and soybeans for  
24 decades. We were so excited. We found out on moving  
25 day that this project was planned. I was holding

1 moving boxes when I was getting the information that  
 2 these rolling hills were about to be filled with  
 3 space-age solar panels and a bunch of information I  
 4 didn't understand, but I was -- I was immediately  
 5 upset, alarmed, overwhelmed, and I wanted to puke. I  
 6 am sure everyone on this call and everyone who is  
 7 tuned in has had some kind of news like this where  
 8 your stomach drops, start sweating. You are just  
 9 overwhelmed. It took a couple weeks for me to  
 10 process the emotion.

11 And what really makes my position in this  
 12 unique is that I work in the -- in the energy  
 13 industry. Specifically I work in long-term  
 14 agreements that impact people, property, and the  
 15 long-term success of small communities like London,  
 16 like Madison Plains, and I truly understand the  
 17 impacts, short-term and long-term, that these deals  
 18 come with.

19 I understand firsthand that big projects  
 20 with big companies bring big dollars and big  
 21 opportunity. For a small community like this, it's  
 22 important that everyone understands that the partner  
 23 you choose in projects like these culturally fits in  
 24 the community, that our goals are aligned. We want  
 25 the same thing.

Sometimes in the -- the initial stages of a deal like this, we'll get excited about what it means to jobs and what it means to schools. And you don't really think beyond that. But in my role in my professional career, my job is to explore what those opportunities are and how they deliver value. So I know firsthand what a good project plan looks like and a good partner to the community and one that's just here to do a job.

Now, the thoughts and opinion that I am sharing this evening are my own and not reflective of the industry I work for or the company I work for, but I just want to add that. But since my initial shock and grief, I have had a lot of conversations with the First Solar project representatives. The first one was hysterical, sobbing, anger, expletives, going through the process of emotion with project partners that didn't foresee a home sale and didn't foresee me coming knowing what I do in the industry I work in.

Through the conversations I've had, they have offered support. They've been great listeners. They've been helpful. They've been kind, and they -- most importantly when I needed it, they recognized how unfair and how -- how this disappointment would



1 impact me and my family given that we didn't see this  
2 coming.

3 Now, I know jobs related to these  
4 projects come and go. I know that the impacts to  
5 schools come and go. But I know that these  
6 opportunities that come from partnerships like these  
7 have lasting impacts on the students in the schools,  
8 on the farmers who have tried to overcome either  
9 years of disappointment in the weather or, you know,  
10 whatever range of challenges they face.

11 And I can testify in my opinion that  
12 First Solar recognizes their responsibilities to the  
13 impacted neighbors, to the schools long term, and  
14 translating dollars that go into the school system  
15 and to real opportunity, education, ensure that these  
16 students have an opportunity that would not otherwise  
17 exist had it not been for this project. They are  
18 prepared to be a trusted partner and take their place  
19 in this county, and I look forward to being that old  
20 crotchety neighbor and making sure that they hold  
21 their promises.

22 Now, I'm never going to do cartwheels  
23 that there are going to be solar panels in my yard,  
24 and I remain disappointed at this hand that I have  
25 been dealt, but through this process through the last

1 several months, I've recognized the true character of  
2 the -- of the project managers, of the company that  
3 will be responsible for this long-term investment;  
4 and I can tell you that they are genuine, they are  
5 transparent, they are here to be a long-term partner  
6 for us in this community.

7 And I think it helps to have a nagging  
8 little person like myself on their shoulder pushing  
9 them to be the best partner they can be until, you  
10 know, the project is complete. So again, not ever  
11 going to do cartwheels but knowing that we have a  
12 good, genuine steward at the helm of this project, I  
13 can sleep at night. Thank you.

14 ALJ SCHABO: Thank you, Ms. Toops.

15 Are there any questions?

16 ALJ SANDOR: No questions.

17 ALJ SCHABO: All right. Thank you very  
18 much.

19 That concludes those individuals who  
20 registered to provide testimony. The Board  
21 appreciates your participation in this public  
22 hearing. I also thank all of those who provided  
23 testimony or joined us for this public hearing either  
24 via Webex or the phone or via the YouTube live  
25 stream.

And with that this concludes tonight's public hearing. Enjoy the rest of your evening. And we are adjourned.

(Thereupon, at 6:44 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the proceedings taken by me in this matter on Wednesday, January 6, 2021, and carefully compared with my original stenographic notes.

Karen Sue Gibson, Registered  
Merit Reporter.

(KSG-7019)

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Summary: Transcript In the Matter of the Application of Big Plain Solar, LLC, for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need to Construct a Solar-Powered Electric Generation Facility in Madison County, Ohio. electronically filed by Mr. Ken Spencer on behalf of Armstrong & Okey, Inc. and Gibson, Karen Sue Mrs.