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BEFORE THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

In the Matter of the Application
of Frasier Solar, LLC for a
Certificate of Environmental
Compatibility and Public Need

Case No.
23-796-EL-BGN

HEARING

DATE: Thursday, April 4, 2024
TIME: 5:00 p.m.
BEFORE: Attorney Examiner David Hicks
Attorney Examiner Manette Asta
LOCATION: Knox Memorial Theater
112 East High Street
Mount Vernon, OH 43050
REPORTED BY: Nic Joseph
JOB NO.: 6379092

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p> <p>1 E X H I B I T S 2 NO. DESCRIPTION ID/EVD 3 (None marked.) 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p> <p>1 a few words. 2 MS. FRENCH: Thank you. 3 First, thank you all so much for taking 4 the time out of your busy schedules to be here tonight 5 in this beautiful venue. Thank you for welcoming all 6 of us into your wonderful community. We are very, 7 very happy to be here. 8 We very much appreciate the opportunity 9 to hear from each and every one of you that wants to 10 speak tonight about your thoughts as it relates to 11 this project. Your thoughts are very, very important 12 to all of us and to our board. So thank you again for 13 taking the time to be here tonight. 14 Thank you, David. 15 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you. 16 So before we get started taking 17 testimony from everyone, there's some introductory 18 information I want to go over. Also, just want to 19 clear up a quick procedural matter that we can get on 20 the record now. 21 As we're on the record, just -- the 22 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 23 Unions 1105 and 608 had both filed for intervention on 24 February 26, 2024. 25 There was an entry issued on April 2,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p> <p>1 P R O C E E D I N G S 2 JUDGE HICKS: The Ohio Power Siting 3 Board has scheduled for hearing at this time and 4 place, April 4, 2023 [sic] at 5 p.m., here at Knox 5 Memorial Theater, Case Number 23-796-EL-BGN, which is 6 captioned In the Matter of the Application of Frasier 7 Solar, LLC, for Certificate of Environmental 8 Compatibility and Public Need. 9 Subject of today's hearing is an 10 application filed by Frasier Solar for the purpose of 11 constructing and operating a solar-powered electric 12 generation facility in Clinton and Miller Townships in 13 the city of Mount Vernon in Knox County, Ohio. 14 My name is David Hicks. With me to my 15 right is Manette Asta, and we are administrative law 16 judges in the Board's legal department and will be 17 conducting tonight's hearing. 18 We also have some members of the Ohio 19 Power Siting Board here with us tonight. Pleased to 20 first introduce the Board's chair, Jennifer French. 21 And next to her is the head of the Ohio EPA, Anne 22 Vogel. And on her left, we have Damian Sikora, who is 23 representing the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. 24 Before we continue, I'm going to turn 25 it over to Chair French, who I know would like to say</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p> <p>1 2024, where intervention was granted for IBEW Local 2 608, but Local 1105 was inadvertently left off that 3 granting of intervention. 4 So I just want to clear up on the 5 record that both of the Locals are being granted 6 intervention in this case. That'll be clarified as 7 well in the next entry that gets issued in the 8 proceeding. 9 Carrying on, the passage of Senate Bill 10 52 provides new opportunities for county commissioners 11 and township trustees to participate in the siting of 12 solar communities. County commissioners may choose 13 one commissioner or a designee to serve as an ad hoc 14 board member. 15 In addition, township trustees may 16 choose one trustee or a designee to serve as their ad 17 hoc board member. 18 The Knox County commissioners have 19 appointed Commissioner Bill Pursel to serve as its 20 representative. I know Mr. Pursel is here. If he 21 wants to wave -- or he may be upstairs. I see him 22 waving, so he is here. 23 And the Clinton and Miller Townships 24 have appointed Galen Smith, who I see up there waving 25 as well. And with him is Mr. Doug Neil, who is the</p>

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1 alternate to fill in for Mr. Smith if he's not able to
2 serve as the ad hoc member.
3 We will go ahead and start, otherwise,
4 by taking appearances of the parties in the case who
5 are here and intend to participate. And we will start
6 with the applicant.
7 MR. SETTINERI: Testing.
8 JUDGE HICKS: You're good.
9 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you, Your Honor,
10 Chair French.
11 On behalf of Frasier Solar, LLC,
12 Michael Settineri and Anna Sanyal of the law firm
13 Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, Columbus, Ohio 43215.
14 With me tonight also is Mr. Craig Adair, project
15 manager for Frasier Solar.
16 And I'll also note for the audience,
17 for those who have questions, there is an information
18 table outside the building where questions can be
19 answered as well. Thank you.
20 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
21 I will just go down the list here, if
22 that's -- yeah. Just go down the line; that's just as
23 easy.
24 MR. DOVE: On behalf of the
25 International Brotherhood of Electric Workers, Local

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1 Union 608 and 1105, the law firm of Kegler, Brown,
2 Hill & Ritter, Robert Dove, 65 East State Street,
3 Suite 1800, Columbus, Ohio 43215.
4 MR. TAVENOR: On behalf of the Ohio
5 Environmental Council, Chris Tavenor. Our address is
6 1145 Chesapeake Avenue, Suite I, Columbus, Ohio 43212.
7 MR. VAN KLEY: On behalf of Preserve
8 Knox County Ohio, this is Jack Van Kley, Van Kley Law,
9 132 Northwoods Boulevard, Suite C-1, Columbus, Ohio.
10 MR. WIEGEL: On behalf of Knox Smart
11 Development/Jared Yost, Zach Wiegel, Freeman Mathis &
12 Gary, 65 East State Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.
13 MR. ELKIN: On behalf Ethan Robertson,
14 Jacob Elkin and my colleague Matthew Eisenson from
15 Columbia Law School Sabin Center for Climate Change
16 Law, address 435 West 116th Street, New York, NY
17 10027.
18 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you. Any other
19 counsel that I missed, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation,
20 Ohio Chamber of Commerce? Okay.
21 I'll just note that intervenors are not
22 required and may choose not to participate in
23 tonight's proceeding, although they may still have
24 representatives in the audience.
25 Frasier Solar's application was filed

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1 on October 10, 2023, and supplemented on November 28,
2 2023. I will also note that board staff filed a
3 report of investigation of March 20, 2024. This
4 report is a recommendation from the board staff and
5 does not necessarily reflect what the board's final
6 determination in this case will be.
7 The purpose of today's public hearing
8 is to receive testimony regarding Frasier Solar's
9 application from entities and persons in the local
10 community who are affected by the proposed project.
11 I will point out that the public
12 hearing is not a question-and-answer session but is an
13 opportunity for you in the audience to testify to let
14 the board know what you think about the proposed
15 project.
16 I'll say that tonight's public hearing
17 is only one aspect of the process in this case. An
18 adjudicatory hearing is scheduled to begin on April
19 29, 2024, which will take place at the offices of the
20 Public Utilities Commission of Ohio.
21 I will note that tonight's hearing is
22 being transcribed by a court reporter, which you will
23 see here, Nic from Veritext. So if you plan to
24 testify, please try and speak clearly so that the
25 court reporter can accurately reflect your comments on

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1 the record.
2 Please make sure that you verbally
3 respond to all questions that are asked so that your
4 response can be transcribed.
5 And to further assist the court
6 reporter in creating a clear record and to facilitate
7 the large number of witnesses that I know have signed
8 up to testify, we would ask that you refrain from
9 shouting or speaking from the crowd, clapping, et
10 cetera, which is going to slow things down and make it
11 very difficult for the court reporter to be able to
12 transcribe the testimony that is being given.
13 After I finish with this introduction,
14 I will begin by calling individuals on the sign-in
15 sheet to testify about the project. Each person who
16 signed up to testify will be permitted to speak once
17 about the project.
18 We will ask you to take an oath or
19 affirmation that what you are about to say is the
20 truth. Your testimony will then be considered as part
21 of the official record in this case, and it will be
22 reviewed by the board before a final decision is made
23 on the application.
24 I will also note that while the
25 administrative law judges do not intend to prohibit

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1 anyone from testifying tonight, this local public
 2 hearing is the only opportunity for non-intervening
 3 parties to provide the board with sworn testimony
 4 regarding the case without having to go through the
 5 formal litigation process.
 6 With that in mind, we will direct that
 7 any intervenors that signed up to testify will testify
 8 after all non-intervenor witnesses have had an
 9 opportunity to provide their testimony.
 10 I will also point out that intervenor
 11 witnesses may be subject to cross-examination by
 12 parties in the case or the bench should they decide to
 13 testify.
 14 As a result, you should ensure that
 15 your attorney is aware of your decision to testify
 16 and, if possible, participates in the proceeding as to
 17 your cross-examination. Should you testify without
 18 your attorney's presence, your voluntary decision to
 19 testify could still subject you to potential cross.
 20 I'll further note that intervenors are
 21 not penalized whether they decide to testify or not
 22 tonight. Should you decide that you do not want to
 23 testify when I call your name from the registration
 24 list, you can pass to the next witness.
 25 If you decide that you'd prefer to file

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1 written comments in the case, our representatives from
 2 board staff out front that I'm sure you met as you
 3 were walking in can assist you and direct you as to
 4 how to file written comments.
 5 Also when you walked in, board staff
 6 had sign-in sheets that allowed you to sign as to
 7 whether you supported or opposed the project. So
 8 you're certainly free to do that at any time.
 9 Okay. Well, at intermission, then, you
 10 will be permitted to sign the sheets that indicate
 11 whether you support or oppose the project. I will
 12 touch base with staff, then, on that point.
 13 Once you have testified or if you're
 14 merely here to observe, you're free to leave the
 15 hearing at any point. I will just reiterate that the
 16 board appreciates your participation in tonight's
 17 hearing.
 18 We want everyone who intends to testify
 19 to have the opportunity to do so. For that reason, we
 20 will ask that you please keep your statement to a
 21 reasonable length of no more than five minutes.
 22 We're not doing this to be rude or try
 23 to cut off anyone's right to testify, but in order to
 24 get through everyone that has signed up tonight, we
 25 will be strictly enforcing this time limit.

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1 I have a nice sign here that we will
 2 flash to you saying that you have 30 seconds left.
 3 And at the five minutes, we will let you know that
 4 your time has expired.
 5 I will again just reiterate, though,
 6 that to the extent that folks do not want to testify
 7 but still want to voice their opinion, that you do
 8 have the opportunity to file public comments in the
 9 case docket.
 10 With that, I will see if there is
 11 anything from counsel before we start calling
 12 witnesses to begin with testimony.
 13 Mr. WIEGEL: Your Honor, Chairwoman, on
 14 behalf of Knox Smart Development, we would like to
 15 make a motion that the commission and the Board not
 16 consider any testimony tonight from residents not
 17 within Knox County.
 18 It is our opinion that Senate Bill
 19 52 -- it was the legislative intent of Senate Bill 52
 20 to make this purely a local issue with county
 21 commissioners' involvement, whether partially
 22 grandfathered or not.
 23 And comments from non-residents of Knox
 24 County do not accurately reflect the feelings of Knox
 25 County. And so we would like to motion to have them

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1 excluded, or at the very least, object to anyone who
 2 testifies that is not from Knox County. Thank you.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 4 MR. VAN KLEY: On behalf Preserve Knox
 5 County Ohio, we would join that objection and also
 6 note that the testimony of persons who live outside of
 7 Knox County is irrelevant and should not be
 8 considered.
 9 MR. SETTINERI: Would you like the
 10 response, Your Honor?
 11 JUDGE HICKS: If you would like, Mr.
 12 Settineri.
 13 MR. SETTINERI: Obviously, on behalf of
 14 Frasier Solar, we object to the motion. These
 15 projects have statewide reaching benefits.
 16 For example, IBEW construction worker
 17 who lives in Morrow County could drive to Knox County
 18 and be able to be home at night for almost a year
 19 versus having to travel out of state for jobs.
 20 So reasonable statewide benefits -- all
 21 testimony is welcome. The Senate Bill 52 is not
 22 applicable.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Settineri.
 24 Bench will go ahead and deny that
 25 motion. We are going to proceed according to the

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1 statute and proceed with testimony from any person
 2 that desires to provide such testimony.
 3 With that, we are going to start off.
 4 I'm going to make the necessary apology in advance if
 5 I butcher anyone's name as I am calling you up. We'll
 6 go ahead and announce the person and let everyone know
 7 who is on deck.
 8 So our first person that is signed up
 9 is Dan Laskin. And on deck, I believe, is Doug
 10 Connors -- Don Comis.
 11 MR. LASKIN: Right here. Thanks very
 12 much.
 13 JUDGE HICKS: Just one moment. I'll
 14 first verify that you're not an intervenor in the
 15 case?
 16 MR. LASKIN: No.
 17 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. I just need to
 18 swear you in. So raise your right hand.
 19 WHEREUPON,
 20 DAN LASKIN,
 21 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 22 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 23 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 24 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please state
 25 and full your name for the record.

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1 THE WITNESS: Daniel, D-A-N-I-E-L,
 2 Laskin, L-A-S-K-I-N.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide
 4 your address including the township?
 5 THE WITNESS: 17070 Glen Road, Mount
 6 Vernon, Ohio. Township is Pleasant Township here in
 7 Knox County.
 8 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 9 within the project area?
 10 THE WITNESS: Not within the project --
 11 well, I live in Knox County, not within the direct
 12 project area.
 13 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go with
 14 your testimony.
 15 DIRECT STATEMENT
 16 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 17 As I said, my name is Dan Laskin. I
 18 live here in Knox County. My wife and I moved here
 19 about 35 years ago. We raised our two sons here, and
 20 we retired here. This is home. We've always valued
 21 this area's rural environment and its ongoing farming
 22 heritage. And it's through this local, close-to-home
 23 lens that I view the Frasier Solar proposal.
 24 At the same time, I know that we in
 25 Knox County are affected inescapably by the forces

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1 shaping the larger world. And just as I care about
 2 our local environment, I also care about the larger
 3 environment, in Ohio, around the country, and
 4 globally. And so I see the Frasier Solar proposal
 5 through that larger lens too.
 6 Looking first at the bigger picture, I
 7 must say that I'm deeply concerned about the serious,
 8 wide-ranging environmental damage caused by climate
 9 change and pollution, in many ways the result of our
 10 society's excessive use of fossil fuels.
 11 I believe that solar power has an
 12 important role to play in supplying cleaner, safer
 13 energy in this country, in Ohio, and yes, in Knox
 14 County.
 15 Solar works, and those of us who get
 16 some of our electricity from solar panels knows that
 17 it works here. Solar alone, I don't think, will meet
 18 our energy needs. But it can certainly play a role.
 19 It can be part of the solution.
 20 And it's far healthier and safer and
 21 much, much better for the environment than energy
 22 derived from fossil fuels.
 23 From this perspective, I support the
 24 Frasier Solar plan. I support the Frasier proposal
 25 from the close-to-home, local perspective too.

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1 I see the biggest threat to our rural
 2 environment as sprawling development that for years
 3 has been changing the character of central Ohio,
 4 changing the character of this area as well.
 5 Farmers and other landowners, when they
 6 face economic pressure, quite naturally turn to the
 7 most lucrative opportunity, often selling their land
 8 for housing development. And when that land goes into
 9 housing, it is lost to agriculture forever.
 10 Solar installations can offer an
 11 alternative opportunity to property owners. And
 12 unlike most housing, they are compatible with some
 13 kinds of farming. Moreover, when the life of a solar
 14 installation ends, the land it occupies can be
 15 returned to agriculture.
 16 A solar project like this one benefits
 17 not only the property owner, but also the community in
 18 the form of tax revenues or payments in lieu of taxes.
 19 Compare that to new housing, which can
 20 add to the demand for government services, increase
 21 traffic on local roads, and put pressure on water
 22 resources, all while taking the land out of farming
 23 forever.
 24 I certainly recognize the need for more
 25 housing in this area, especially affordable housing.

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1 But realistically, the kind of housing that goes into
 2 large rural tracts consists of relatively expensive
 3 homes spread across one- or two-acre lots.
 4 Very few families benefit. Our local
 5 housing needs remain largely unmet. Farming on that
 6 land is gone, and our rural environment further
 7 erodes.
 8 Let's plan for new housing closer to
 9 our towns. And if the owners of rural land want to
 10 profit from their property, let's make solar an
 11 opportunity for them, an option that in my view is a
 12 win for the community.
 13 Finally, as you deliberate, I trust
 14 first that you will consider views from all sides and
 15 that while listening to all voices, the quiet and calm
 16 ones as well as the loud and angry ones, you rely
 17 above all on expertise, reason, scientific consensus,
 18 and a balanced view of public policy. Thank you.
 19 JUDGE HICKS: Hold on just a second,
 20 sir. There may be questions.
 21 I'll also note for anyone that
 22 testifies, if you have a written statement that you
 23 would like to leave with the court reporter, you are
 24 free to do so.
 25 Any questions from counsel for the

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1 witness?
 2 Thank you, sir, for your testimony.
 3 Up now is Don Comis, and on deck is
 4 Patti Ray.
 5 Mr. Comis, are you an intervenor in the
 6 case?
 7 MR. COMIS: No.
 8 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. I'll swear you in.
 9 Please raise your right hand.
 10 WHEREUPON,
 11 DONALD COMIS,
 12 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 13 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 14 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 16 spell your name for the record.
 17 THE WITNESS: Donald Comis, C-O-M-I-S.
 18 JUDGE HICKS: And could you please
 19 provide your address including the township.
 20 THE WITNESS: 3738 Apple Valley Drive,
 21 Howard Township.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 23 in the project area?
 24 THE WITNESS: No.
 25 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead

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1 with your testimony.
 2 DIRECT STATEMENT
 3 THE WITNESS: If you don't -- if you
 4 don't think that residential and commercial
 5 development is the real threat to farmland in Knox,
 6 look at my drive from Walmart to Apple Valley on Route
 7 36.
 8 I see barbed wire fences around two
 9 storage facilities and around a barn that looks like
 10 it is not part of a farm operation.
 11 We just lost 375 acres of farmland sold
 12 in parcels. The skeleton of one housing development
 13 is already up. The main beauty is no longer along the
 14 roadside but in the distant hills and valleys. And we
 15 are just at the beginning of the explosion of
 16 residential and commercial development.
 17 I'd rather see tall prairie plants
 18 hiding solar panels than houses which bring more
 19 traffic or storage units with no screening.
 20 And Ohio needs prairies desperately,
 21 having lost nearly all of this native treasure. The
 22 prairie at the Frasier Solar farm will enhance
 23 farmland, leaving the soil better than it was before
 24 the solar farm.
 25 And it will attract pollinators to

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1 nearby farms, not to mention quail and pheasants and
 2 other wildlife, just as the Pheasants Forever Food
 3 Plots do at the Campbell Farm near Apple Valley.
 4 It will also rest the land just as the
 5 USDA conservation reserve program does, only it will
 6 do it without taxpayer money, paying farmers to lease
 7 some part of their farms and to graze their sheep. It
 8 will restore nitrogen lost to corn plants and loosen
 9 the soil, among many other benefits.
 10 Solar farms can help keep farmers
 11 farming, and the lease can at least save fields from
 12 irreversible development for up to 40 years.
 13 Maybe that will give us time to find
 14 better ways to save farmland from residential and
 15 other commercial development before turf grass for
 16 golf courses and lawns around homes and business
 17 becomes the number one crop in Ohio, displacing
 18 soybeans.
 19 It is now the number two field crop in
 20 Ohio, relegating corn to third place. Thank you.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Hold on just a second.
 22 Any question from counsel for the
 23 witness?
 24 Thank you for your testimony.
 25 THE WITNESS: Sure.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Up next is Patti Ray, and
 2 on deck is Lindsey Kohlenburg.
 3 Ms. Ray, are you an intervenor in the
 4 case?
 5 MS. RAY: No.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. If you please
 7 raise right your hand.
 8 WHEREUPON,
 9 PATTI RAY,
 10 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 11 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 12 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 13 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 14 your name for the record.
 15 MS. RAY: My name is Patti Ray,
 16 P-A-T-T-I-R-A-Y. I live at 102 Colonial Woods Drive
 17 in Mount Vernon, Monroe Township.
 18 JUDGE HICKS: Do you live or work
 19 within the project area?
 20 THE WITNESS: Not exactly. I live in
 21 Morrow -- I mean, excuse me -- Knox County.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 23 with your testimony.
 24 DIRECT STATEMENT
 25 THE WITNESS: I request that the Siting

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1 Board approve the Frasier Solar project. I have been
 2 a registered nurse for over 45 years, and the last 15
 3 years of my career have been in public health and
 4 disaster preparedness.
 5 I have two points to make. Both of
 6 them are about freedom. My first point, we need to
 7 protect our fundamental American value: our private
 8 property rights.
 9 The landowner has the right to sell or
 10 lease the land to whomever he chooses, even knowing
 11 that it may never be restored to its former use or
 12 beauty.
 13 I come from Morrow County, and during
 14 the oil boom of the 1960s, we even had an oil well in
 15 our Methodist church parking lot. Our government
 16 never prevented the farmers from leasing their land to
 17 the oil and gas corporations in Knox County either.
 18 I read that over 5,000 wells have been
 19 drilled in Knox County since 1985. And across the
 20 state, we have over 19,000 abandoned orphan wells
 21 polluting our environment.
 22 Thankfully, with the help of funding
 23 from President Biden's infrastructure investment and
 24 jobs act, we are going to be cleaning up those wells.
 25 That includes the 14 wells here in Knox

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1 County to protect our own health and safety, according
 2 to our Knox County public health department.
 3 Our local politicians want us to
 4 believe that preventing solar power from coming to
 5 Knox County is about protecting our farmlands.
 6 The empowering America mission that
 7 they support is really about protecting oil and gas
 8 industry, as evidenced by the dark-money-funded event
 9 in Mount Vernon last November 30th and the mail orders
 10 that we all received in the mail just prior to the
 11 election.
 12 Natural gas has played a role in Knox
 13 County since the 1900s, a large part through the Arial
 14 Corporation and the Cooper Bessemer Manufacturing.
 15 Knox Countians have benefited and so have our local
 16 colleges from their philanthropy.
 17 However, there is no reason that solar
 18 cannot exist side by side with natural gas to create
 19 more jobs and affordable energy for all of us.
 20 If our elected local representatives
 21 wanted to protect our farmland, why did they rezone 34
 22 acres of pastoral farmland to allow Rockford
 23 Construction to build 496 units on Upper Gilchrist
 24 Road right outside my bedroom window?
 25 And now Lemmon Development has been

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1 given the approval to build another 156 units on the
 2 34 rolling farm acres just north of that.
 3 Did they consider the dumpsters, the
 4 noise, the traffic, the pollution of an additional 500
 5 cars per day or the water runoff and the rising heat
 6 from all the shingles and asphalt roads?
 7 I would gladly live across the road
 8 from a solar farm. I would still enjoy my view from
 9 my house of the sunrise, the trees, and the horizon.
 10 Solar panels no higher than 10 feet would be hidden by
 11 landscaping but still provide a refuge for our
 12 wildlife.
 13 My second point, solar will indeed
 14 serve the public interest. I believe we have a duty
 15 to protect the health of our children and our
 16 vulnerable populations like the elderly from the
 17 serious consequences of dirty water and air.
 18 And solar energy is clean energy, not
 19 the gas from fracked shale as our politicians would
 20 have you believe. Most of all, I believe that the
 21 pollution from fossil fuels harms our unborn children,
 22 causing damage that lasts a lifetime.
 23 We should defend our freedom to create
 24 clean energy from renewable resources like solar. I
 25 support the Frasier Solar project. Thank you.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 2 Any question from counsel?
 3 Thank you for your testimony.
 4 Up next is Linsey Kohlenburg, and on
 5 deck is Barry Lester.
 6 Ms. Kohlenburg, are you an intervenor
 7 in the case?
 8 MS. KOHLENBURG: I am not.
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. If you could
 10 please raise your right hand.
 11 WHEREUPON,
 12 LINDSEY KOHLENBURG,
 13 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 14 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 15 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 17 spell your name for the record.
 18 THE WITNESS: My name is Lindsey,
 19 L-I-N-D-S-E-Y, last name Kohlenburg,
 20 K-O-H-L-E-N-B-U-R-G.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide
 22 your address including the township.
 23 THE WITNESS: Yes. I live at 4439
 24 Township Road 75. That's Mount Gilead, 43338. And I
 25 live in Mount Gilead West Township.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Do you live or work
 2 within the project area?
 3 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 5 DIRECT STATEMENT
 6 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 7 I appreciate you giving me the
 8 opportunity to speak and for everyone to get a chance
 9 to listen to my comments. I'm a lifelong resident of
 10 Ohio. I grew up on a family dairy farm in Holmes
 11 County just up the road from here. I am a retired
 12 middle school teacher.
 13 I'm working with a realtor -- a ReMax
 14 realtor here in Mount Vernon to purchase a home.
 15 We're getting close. As a future resident, I ask that
 16 the siting board approve the Frasier Solar project.
 17 Yes, we're -- all of us here have been
 18 beneficiaries of the age of fossil fuels, my
 19 generation particularly. But now we know better ways
 20 to create some of the energy our communities need to
 21 thrive long-range.
 22 As a person of faith, I believe
 23 pollution harms all of creation, causing damage that
 24 lasts beyond our puny lifetimes. It must be our
 25 responsibility to conserve the bountiful resources God

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1 has given us.
 2 Contaminated water, air pollution that
 3 we can see, and greenhouse pollution we cannot see are
 4 the consequences of burning fossil fuels, along with
 5 our careless handling of the same. And I have a
 6 reference here about methane leakage.
 7 This pollution creates serious
 8 consequences for the health of our precious local
 9 ecosystem and the health and safety of our children
 10 and other vulnerable populations.
 11 Senior citizens like me and people with
 12 chronic health conditions pay the highest price as a
 13 result of these pollutants, and I have a reference for
 14 that comment.
 15 Farmers must find new ways to keep
 16 farming in spite of the temperature and precipitation
 17 anomalies that come with a warming climate. Stronger
 18 storms, big hail events, and tornadoes add even more
 19 risk to producers business models. I have a reference
 20 for that.
 21 Any time our own community, with the
 22 help of local landowners, can produce clean
 23 electricity, we're reducing pollution, reducing
 24 greenhouse gas emissions, and giving our neighbors,
 25 especially our children, the true gift of life.

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1 I ask the Siting Commission to look at
 2 the long-range benefits to this community. And I
 3 believe polluting [sic] the Frasier Solar project
 4 sites for clean solar power will help free our
 5 children from further air, water, and greenhouse
 6 pollution that comes with fossil-fuel-derived energy
 7 as well as help sustain the other plant and animal
 8 life with whom we share this special place.
 9 Approval of the Frasier Solar project
 10 defends our local freedom to create clean energy from
 11 sunshine. Approval of the Frasier Solar project will
 12 support the landowners' right to use their land for
 13 this good purpose. Thank you.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 15 And questions from counsel?
 16 Mr. Van Kley?
 17 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 18 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 19 Q Just to be clear for the record, what county
 20 do you live in currently?
 21 A I live in Morrow County and I'm about to
 22 purchase a home here, but it's not a done deal yet.
 23 Q Yeah. So have you picked out a location in
 24 this county?
 25 A Yes.

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1 Q Okay. How far from the project area is it?

2 A Well, it's in Mount Vernon -- Mount Vernon.

3 Q And within the city proper?

4 A Yes.

5 Q Okay. Thank you.

6 JUDGE HICKS: Any other questions from

7 counsel?

8 Thank you for your testimony.

9 MS. KOHLENBURG: Thank you.

10 JUDGE HICKS: Now up is Barry Lester,

11 and on deck is Andrew Davis.

12 Mr. Lester, are you an intervenor in

13 the case?

14 MR. LESTER: No, sir.

15 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your

16 right hand.

17 WHEREUPON,

18 BARRY LESTER,

19 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

20 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

21 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

22 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell

23 your name for the record.

24 THE WITNESS: Barry, B-A-R-R-Y, last

25 name Lester, L-E-S-T-E-R.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide

2 your --

3 THE WITNESS: I live at 767 Southridge

4 Drive, Mount Vernon, Ohio. And I live in Clinton

5 Township, which is affected by this.

6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And just to -- so

7 you do live or work in the project area, just to

8 clarify for the record?

9 THE WITNESS: I do.

10 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead

11 with your testimony.

12 DIRECT STATEMENT

13 THE WITNESS: First off, thanks for

14 coming. Thanks for the outpour of the community here.

15 I am the newly -- won the primary for

16 county commissioner here in Knox County.

17 If you look at the record for the

18 primary vote this year, those who oppose solar energy

19 versus those who are pro-solar energy, the vote

20 outcome was overwhelming: 70 percent of this county

21 did not want solar energy in our fields.

22 Throughout this campaign, I have

23 visited 18 of 22 townships. And I'm proud to say that

24 with the effort of other people involved, but my

25 personal visits, phone calls, we have 17 of 22

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1 townships that have signed resolutions that want to be

2 exclusionary areas. And now the city proper of Mount

3 Vernon.

4 This solar was unknown until Preserve

5 Knox County started putting yellow signs up. Nobody

6 knew about it. It was slid in. A resolution was

7 signed, and then SB 52 came out.

8 Ironically, all these debates and

9 meetings I've attended, most of the people who oppose

10 it actually own farms. A lot of people who are for it

11 own houses in the city or not near the farms.

12 My question is, someday if this

13 overtakes you, how are you going to feel when you wake

14 up and there's a solar field right next to you? You

15 want that truly or not?

16 I have personally visited other

17 projects. It's a disaster. Personally go visit if

18 you have not. There's corrosion.

19 Now the thing that scares me is we're

20 going to have neighbors suing neighbors over home

21 devaluation, corrosion, runoff. Who knows what's

22 going to follow? We are not.

23 We are good stewards of this county and

24 the land that we own and we live in. We need to

25 understand that. We really need to fight that battle.

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1 I will tell you that you need to take the passion back

2 that you see here this evening.

3 And without being recorded, it's up to

4 you, the people on the very stage that we're looking

5 at, to take the passion rather than transcripts back

6 to you to you -- to whoever is going to look further

7 into this.

8 I will leave with a couple things.

9 First off, I think it's very unfair that you are

10 weighting any testimony from anybody that does not

11 live in this county. This is a grassroot thing and a

12 county issue.

13 THE REPORTER: Excuse me. Excuse me.

14 JUDGE HICKS: Folks, please, we -- in

15 the interest of time -- and the court reporter cannot

16 get the testimony with background noise.

17 MR. LESTER: The other thing that I

18 would like for you to take into consideration is when

19 people give their testimony that they're for or

20 against solar, I would like to know if there has been

21 compensation and/or benefits that have not been given

22 yet but could be in the future --

23 JUDGE HICKS: Please, folks.

24 MR. LESTER: -- other than paid

25 counsel.

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1 I will stick to one word that I heard
 2 the attorney say earlier. It's going to be great for
 3 the union workers. And right of out his mouth he said
 4 a Morrow County union worker can come to Knox County
 5 and benefit. Where's the benefit for the Knox County
 6 union worker if that's what we're looking for?
 7 And then I'll leave with just a funny
 8 thing. When's the last time anybody heard, "What's
 9 for dinner?" "Sheetz for dinner." "No, not today."
 10 Thank you.
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Please, folks.
 12 Any questions from counsel?
 13 Thank you for your testimony.
 14 Up next is Andrew Davis -- oh, I'm
 15 sorry.
 16 Mr. Lester?
 17 You're slow on the draw there, Mr.
 18 Settineri.
 19 THE WITNESS: That's all right.
 20 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 21 BY MR. SETTINERI:
 22 Q Mr. Lester, Mike Settineri on behalf of
 23 Frasier Solar.
 24 A I figured.
 25 Q As a county commissioner, are you going to

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1 base your decision only on passion?
 2 A The what?
 3 Q As a county commissioner, are you going to
 4 base your decision only on passion?
 5 A No, sir. I am very transparent in any
 6 decision I make. But let me tell you what. When you
 7 take passion out of decision, it can take you down the
 8 wrong path.
 9 You still have to use passion; you have to
 10 use transparency to make those things -- you have to
 11 be passionate about the decisions you make. Are you
 12 passionate about the decisions you make for your
 13 clients?
 14 Q So you're going to be -- you're saying that
 15 the board should consider passion amongst all other
 16 factors?
 17 A That is not what I said, sir.
 18 Q All right. Let me ask this: did you review
 19 the staff report issued in this proceeding?
 20 A No, sir.
 21 Q You did not?
 22 A No, sir.
 23 Q So you don't know that there are 60
 24 conditions the staff has recommended?
 25 A No, sir, I do not.

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1 Q You don't know that some of those conditions
 2 address decommissioning, bonding --
 3 A I do.
 4 Q -- road protection. You're not aware of
 5 that?
 6 A I am aware of that.
 7 Q But you didn't review the staff report?
 8 A I did, absolutely. I wasn't familiar with
 9 what you're referring to. I looked at it, and it
 10 pretty much tells a great story. It flatlines with no
 11 increase for inflation. The decommissioning is way
 12 short in the future.
 13 You're talking about 40 years ago. So give
 14 me the real numbers at 40 years that show me -- not
 15 flatline -- where does the decommissioning increase.
 16 And it does not on the sheet that this young man has
 17 brought to all the --
 18 Q So you're also aware that there are
 19 conditions related to restoration of soil at the
 20 project --
 21 A I do. I did. I do understand also that
 22 you're putting pillars in the ground. You can scrape
 23 the soil and pile it and any farmer in here will come
 24 up here and tell you the soil will never be the same
 25 once you do that. You have to --

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1 Q And you're against sheep grazing, I take it?
 2 A I'm sorry?
 3 Q You're against sheep grazing?
 4 A No. No. I am against turning a cropland or
 5 a grazing field into a solar field with sheep grazing
 6 under it. That's not agriculture. When did solar
 7 become agriculture, because you're farming sunshine?
 8 Come on.
 9 Q So you're okay with this facility or this
 10 land to be used for sheep grazing but only sheep
 11 grazing?
 12 A Absolutely.
 13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Why didn't you
 14 cross-examine the other people?
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Folks, please. If you
 16 have something to say, you can sign up to testify.
 17 THE WITNESS: Here's the thing. I know
 18 that you're a educated man and I am not. I came up
 19 the school of hard knocks. I was born and raised in
 20 this county. I've seen farm my whole life.
 21 Where are we going to get food? Where
 22 are we going to get crops? Where are we going to get
 23 dairy if it is solar? I'm asking you. You're a
 24 professional, educated man.
 25 BY MR. SETTINERI:

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1 Q And I'm the one asking the questions.

2 A Yeah, well, I can ask back apparently, if

3 I'm being --

4 JUDGE HICKS: No. Sir, the questions

5 are coming from Mr. Settineri.

6 BY MR. SETTINERI:

7 Q Let me ask this: For this land, do you

8 prefer to stay in agriculture, or would you prefer to

9 see in residential subdivisions?

10 A So I'll state that I think that I am not of

11 sprawling. I don't think that anybody ought to be ten

12 acres of land, put 20 houses on it.

13 But I think there's room for industry, which

14 we desperately need here in this county. And we also

15 need affordable housing in this county, which we do

16 not have. So I will ask you, would you'd rather

17 see -- am I allowed to ask questions?

18 JUDGE HICKS: No, the questions come

19 from Mr. Settineri.

20 THE WITNESS: Okay. So I guess I will

21 hush.

22 MR. SETTINERI: All right. No further

23 questions, Your Honor.

24 Thank you, Mr. Lester.

25 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir. I'll be

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1 glad to continue in the lobby, if --

2 JUDGE HICKS: I think there's another

3 question. I will just caveat here, Mr. Van Kley,

4 we're not looking for friendly cross. So --

5 MR. VAN KLEY: Okay. I just have a

6 clarification question.

7 JUDGE HICKS: Okay.

8 CROSS-EXAMINATION

9 BY MR. VAN KLEY:

10 You mentioned in your testimony that it was 70

11 percent were opposed to a facility and 20 percent in

12 favor. Is that what you said?

13 A The voting shows that. If you -- there's

14 township trustees here tonight that will speak, and

15 they had open forums.

16 And I am probably heavy by saying 20 or 30

17 percent at their open forums that were for. It was

18 probably 90/10 in all actuality. 90 percent in their

19 open forums absolutely did not want.

20 MR. VAN KLEY: Okay. Thank you.

21 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.

22 Up now is Andrew Davis; on deck is

23 Angely Herrera Davis.

24 Mr. Davis, are you an intervenor in the

25 case?

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1 MR. DAVIS: I am not.

2 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your

3 right hand.

4 WHEREUPON,

5 ANDREW DAVIS,

6 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

7 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

8 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

9 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell

10 your name for the record.

11 THE WITNESS: A-N-D-R-E-W D-A-V-I-S.

12 JUDGE HICKS: And could you please

13 provide your address including township if any.

14 THE WITNESS: 111 North Catherine

15 Street, Mount Vernon, Ohio. And it is Monroe

16 Township.

17 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work

18 in the project area?

19 THE WITNESS: I do not.

20 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead

21 with your testimony.

22 DIRECT STATEMENT

23 THE WITNESS: Thank you for the chance

24 to talk about something that could really make a

25 difference in our town. We stand at a crossroads with

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1 the chance to welcome an all-American business that

2 seeks not just to set up shop but to invest in our

3 community, to contribute to our prosperity.

4 How could we, in good conscience, turn

5 them away? Across Ohio, coal plants are reaching the

6 end of their useful life and shutting down. Luckily,

7 we can replace them with a more affordable, efficient,

8 and cleaner solar energy alternatives.

9 If we turn away from this opportunity,

10 we will not only miss out on the benefits solar power

11 brings, but we'll also find ourselves reliant on power

12 sources from other counties or states, places that had

13 the foresight to embrace what we might reject.

14 I've personally seen the savings solar

15 can bring. My electricity bill dropped nearly half

16 after I switched to a solar electricity supplier.

17 Yeah. From 11 cents down to 6 cents per kilowatt. It

18 made me think, "Why not keep that money for our

19 community?"

20 Honestly, who likes the idea of paying

21 more for dirty energy when you could have cleaner air

22 and cheaper bills? Solar power is the cheapest form

23 of electricity today. It is good for our wallets and

24 great for our air.

25 Now, about our farmland. This solar

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1 project uses something called agrivoltaics. It's a
 2 simple idea. Our farms stay farms, and they get even
 3 better. The plan includes growing native plants and
 4 having sheep around to help improve the soil. So we
 5 are not losing farmland; we're enhancing it.
 6 I know there's been some confusion
 7 about solar power. But think about it. Our schools
 8 and town could see millions in funding from this
 9 project. We shouldn't miss out because of a
 10 misinformation campaign against solar.
 11 I believe in the value of buying local.
 12 Supporting our local farmers and the businesses that
 13 are the backbone of our community. Imagine a future
 14 where our electricity too comes from a local source, a
 15 future where our town benefits from cleaner energy,
 16 and yes, lower energy bills as a result.
 17 So here's the bottom line. The solar
 18 project isn't about clean energy; it's about bringing
 19 our town together, investing in our future, and yes,
 20 saving some money along the way.
 21 Let's make a choice that benefits all
 22 of us, both today and tomorrow. Let's not let this
 23 chance slip us by. Thank you for listening. Let's
 24 make a decision we can all be proud of.
 25 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.

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1 Any questions from counsel?
 2 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 3 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 4 Q Did you discuss your testimony that you gave
 5 tonight with Open Roads or Frasier Solar?
 6 A No, did not.
 7 Q Okay. Have you had any contact with them?
 8 A Just in passing. I know I've --
 9 Q Okay. Like, say hello?
 10 A Yeah, like today.
 11 Q They didn't solicit your testimony tonight?
 12 A No.
 13 Q Okay. How far is your residence from the
 14 project area?
 15 A So I live downtown Mount Vernon, just down
 16 the street here.
 17 Q Okay. So how many miles would you say the
 18 solar project is going to be from your residence?
 19 A I believe part of the project is in Mount
 20 Vernon proper, so pretty close, within walking
 21 distance of my house.
 22 Q Okay. Would you be able to see it from your
 23 house?
 24 A No.
 25 MR. VAN KLEY: Okay. Thank you.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you for your
 2 testimony. One more question.
 3 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 4 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 5 Q Just to clarify, you said you switched your
 6 home energy bill to a solar company?
 7 A Yes.
 8 Q Do you know where that solar company is
 9 located?
 10 A Sure. It is 100 percent renewable from
 11 Shipley Energy.
 12 Q And do you know where their solar fields
 13 are?
 14 A So the company is located in Pennsylvania.
 15 Q In Pennsylvania. So not necessarily the
 16 solar panels going in Knox County. That energy could
 17 be shipped out to Pennsylvania?
 18 A Yeah.
 19 Q Okay. Thank you.
 20 A I'd like to get the savings, you know, in
 21 our county.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 23 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 24 JUDGE HICKS: Up next is Angely Herrera
 25 Davis, and on deck is Gary Houser.

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1 Are you an intervenor in the case?
 2 MS. DAVIS: No.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Please raise your right
 4 hand.
 5 WHEREUPON,
 6 ANGELY HERRERA DAVIS,
 7 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 8 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 9 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 10 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 11 your name for the record.
 12 THE WITNESS: Angely Herrera Davis,
 13 A-N-G-E-L-Y H-E-R-R-E-R-A D-A-V-I-S.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And could you
 15 please provide your address including the township.
 16 THE WITNESS: 111 North Catherine
 17 Street, Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050, Monroe Township.
 18 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 19 within the project area?
 20 THE WITNESS: No.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 22 DIRECT STATEMENT
 23 THE WITNESS: I stand before you as a
 24 dog-mom, scientist, and writer, who calls Mount
 25 Vernon, Ohio, her home. A scientist who supports

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p> <p>1 solar and who supports this project. Science is truth 2 quantified.</p> <p>3 People can jab all they want, but facts 4 make sense of the chaos around us, and the truth about 5 what's happening underneath each solar panel is one of 6 hope. A place for our local wildlife to call home.</p> <p>7 Even though we tried to erase wildlife 8 out of our lives by cutting down their habitats, 9 replacing their sources of nectar with lawns, and 10 pushing them as far away from our homes as possible, 11 they are still here because this is their home too.</p> <p>12 I reviewed the planting plans for the 13 840-acre area that will make the Frasier Solar 14 project. As someone who finds peace in her pollinator 15 garden, I hope that these 840 acres would bring others 16 peace as well.</p> <p>17 Mother nature doesn't like to be naked, 18 and protecting the soil from surface erosion and 19 helping develop a healthy and strong soil structure on 20 this property is a top priority for Frasier Solar.</p> <p>21 There are seven species of plants on 22 this planting plan that are 100 percent native to 23 Mount Vernon, Ohio. How long have they called Mount 24 Vernon, Ohio, their home? Thousands of years.</p> <p>25 If anyone can call this land home, it's</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p> <p>1 These rural communities resonate with 2 me because they know what their neighbors need and 3 they vouch for making sure that their community 4 receives benefits, whether it's scholarships, a new 5 park, more jobs, you name it.</p> <p>6 They want that clean energy money to go 7 back into their town, and they don't get caught up in 8 fearful propaganda that stops them from funding the 9 future of their people.</p> <p>10 Now Mount Vernon isn't considered a 11 rural area because we've got suburbs and everything in 12 this town is only a country song away. I know; I've 13 timed it. But what I've gathered from living here is 14 that we care about each other and know what we need.</p> <p>15 So it surprises me to see that we are 16 saying no to \$48.2 million for Knox County, no to \$19 17 million for Mount Vernon City schools, no to \$2.8 18 million for developmental disabilities, and no to \$3.4 19 million for the Knox County Career Center, just to 20 name a few areas.</p> <p>21 Communities fear what they do not know, 22 but darkness also thrives on fear. And as Christian, 23 I choose to follow the path that leads to hope for our 24 community. And to me, driving by a solar field that 25 brings jobs, money to our community, and a home for</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p> <p>1 these native plants and the wildlife who evolved 2 together with them. 172 species of native butterflies 3 and moths use these seven species as caterpillar host 4 plants.</p> <p>5 And this doesn't even begin to touch on 6 the birds, bees, and other wildlife who rely on these 7 plants.</p> <p>8 Out of all these plants, common 9 milkweed stands out to me. This is a host plant for 10 the monarch butterfly. We are lucky enough to fall 11 along her migration path for spring and summer.</p> <p>12 She spends the winter in Mexico, but in 13 the springtime decides that Mount Vernon, out of all 14 places, sounds like a good town to have a drink, 15 settle down, and raise her young.</p> <p>16 While she may not have an opinion on 17 how ugly solar panels may be, she definitely has 18 something to say about whether there's a place to stay 19 and good food to eat.</p> <p>20 We have the choice to be good hosts or 21 bad hosts to this beautiful creature and honor the 22 fact that we could provide many acres of home for her.</p> <p>23 I currently work as a writer who helps 24 rural communities plan how they will give back to the 25 community with the money that clean energy brings in.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p> <p>1 butterflies, gives me more hope than an empty 2 cornfield.</p> <p>3 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you. 4 Any questions from counsel? 5 Thank you for your testimony. 6 Up now is Gary Houser, and on deck is 7 Kathy Gamble.</p> <p>8 Mr. Houser, are you an intervenor in 9 the case?</p> <p>10 MR. HOUSER: No, I'm not.</p> <p>11 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your 12 right hand.</p> <p>13 WHEREUPON, 14 GARY HOUSER, 15 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn 16 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but 17 the truth, was examined and testified as follows: 18 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and 19 spell your name for the record.</p> <p>20 THE WITNESS: Gary Houser, G-A-R-Y 21 H-O-U-S-E-R.</p> <p>22 JUDGE HICKS: You may want to push the 23 mic up just a little.</p> <p>24 THE WITNESS: Yeah. How's that? 25 JUDGE HICKS: Perfect. If you could</p>

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1 please provide your address.
 2 THE WITNESS: Yes. I think there was a
 3 mistake made. I need to correct my address. I
 4 entered the address for the organization that I'm
 5 representing as a volunteer. If you want my home
 6 address --
 7 JUDGE HICKS: You can go ahead and
 8 provide your address for the court reporter now.
 9 THE WITNESS: Okay. All right. May I
 10 start now?
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Provide your address for
 12 the court reporter now.
 13 THE WITNESS: Oh, okay. It's 29 Atkins
 14 Street, Glouster, Ohio. It's Trimble Township.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 16 within the project area?
 17 THE WITNESS: No, I don't.
 18 JUDGE HICKS: Please go ahead with your
 19 testimony.
 20 DIRECT STATEMENT
 21 THE WITNESS: I'd like to start by
 22 saying I'm a Franciscan. I'm here because it is my
 23 belief that God's earthly creation is a sacred gift,
 24 and all Christians have a deep moral responsibility to
 25 be good stewards of that gift and to protect it from

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1 harm.
 2 I'm not here to preach. But I just
 3 share that because it's the reason why I am here
 4 attending this hearing.
 5 And I'd like to address the issue
 6 allowing people to take part in these hearings who do
 7 not necessarily live in Knox County. I know many
 8 people in the city of Columbus who are extremely
 9 concerned about this issue.
 10 And I'd like for people who are not
 11 aware of this fact to know that three years ago, the
 12 city of Columbus voted on a ballot measure which
 13 passed overwhelmingly, by 75 percent of the citizens
 14 in Columbus, requiring the City to provide 100 percent
 15 of its electrical needs from clean renewable sources
 16 within a certain number of years.
 17 That passed overwhelmingly. The city
 18 of Columbus is now under a legal mandate to find
 19 sources of clean, green energy within the central Ohio
 20 region.
 21 And so the people of Columbus who voted
 22 on that ballot measure and approved it overwhelmingly
 23 also are involved in this issue of the Frasier Solar
 24 farm. It is not exclusively a Knox County issue.
 25 The people of Columbus voted, and it is

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1 the will of those people that the city find as many
 2 solar farm opportunities as possible so they can
 3 supply. And a city the size of Columbus, you can
 4 imagine the size of that electrical need. It's huge.
 5 And so that is another issue that's
 6 very real and operating in conjunction with what's
 7 happening here in Knox County.
 8 I've seen a lot of concern expressed
 9 about losing the agricultural use of land. And some
 10 see this as a stewardship issue. I understand that
 11 concern.
 12 But as of March 8th, something very new
 13 is happening. There is now an agreement between Open
 14 Road Renewables and New Slate Land management to
 15 institute a dual use of the site such that a full 800
 16 of the 840 total acres are going to be designated for
 17 sheep grazing.
 18 This scale would make it one of the
 19 largest sheep grazing operations in the state. Knox
 20 County at one time was one of the leading areas for
 21 sheep grazing east of the Mississippi River. Some
 22 people probably know that history well.
 23 This would be an opportunity to regain
 24 some of that stature. Sheep grazers today are running
 25 into much difficulty gaining access to land because of

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1 cost.
 2 But the combination on land being
 3 developed for solar is a perfect match. Not only do
 4 grazers gain that access, but the soil is going to be
 5 maintained in a very healthy condition by the growth
 6 of vibrant vegetation for the sheep to forage.
 7 So I believe my question to the
 8 opponents is a fair one. Since this step that will
 9 keep the entire site in agricultural use was taken on
 10 March 8th, why are the same claims continuing to be
 11 made, right up to the date of this hearing, that this
 12 solar project is going to take away such agricultural
 13 use?
 14 I'm honestly at a loss to understand
 15 that. There's a new reality here that the opponents
 16 don't seem to be accepting as having happened. A
 17 contract has been signed that will maintain the
 18 agricultural use of this land.
 19 Why does the opposition continue to
 20 press this case when this shift actually resolves the
 21 very concern they were expressing?
 22 And I would like to add, to the members
 23 of the Siting Board, I actual -- I'm involved in video
 24 production. And I produced a video specifically to
 25 show what it would look like to have sheep grazing on

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1 the Frasier Solar site. And I found out that that
 2 would not be allowed at this hearing.
 3 I'd like to ask members of the board to
 4 consider for the future, that sometimes the video
 5 medium can be very educational, can illuminate issues
 6 for both sides of the issue in a way that I think
 7 would be helpful. And I would ask that a modification
 8 to that rule be made.
 9 So if somebody provides all of their
 10 own --
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Mr. Houser, I'm going
 12 to -- your five minutes have hit.
 13 THE WITNESS: Okay.
 14 We are going to need to strictly
 15 enforce that. One moment.
 16 Any questions from Counsel?
 17 Mr. Van Kley?/
 18 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 19 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 20 Q What is your county of residence?
 21 A The county is Athens County.
 22 Q Okay. You're a little ways from home.
 23 A Yeah. I can speak to that if you allow me.
 24 Q No, it's okay. So you were talking about
 25 the city of Columbus voting to have their power

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1 produced by renewable energy; right?
 2 A Right.
 3 Q Are any of the solar facilities that are
 4 providing the renewable energy to Columbus located
 5 within the city of Columbus borders?
 6 A They don't have the amount of space that
 7 would allow for that.
 8 Q Yeah. So the city of Columbus voters voted
 9 to have electricity produced by solar farms in rural
 10 communities outside Columbus; correct?
 11 A Because that's the only place that has the
 12 physical space.
 13 Q Yeah. So the city of Columbus is relying on
 14 renewable energy produced at facilities that they
 15 don't have to live with; right?
 16 A Well, if you would allow me to answer that
 17 question -- the assumption behind that --
 18 MR. VAN KLEY: Your Honor, I'd like the
 19 witness --
 20 THE WITNESS: The assumption behind the
 21 ballot measure is that the consequences of the climate
 22 crisis do not end at the border of Knox County. It is
 23 a crisis of such a magnitude it transcends county
 24 borders, transcends state borders, transcends national
 25 borders.

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1 If there was ever an issue that
 2 humanity face that was saying to us that we are all in
 3 this together, it is the climate crisis.
 4 And so therefore, the assumption is
 5 that yes, we all need to pull together here in central
 6 Ohio and address this issue in a responsible way. And
 7 the most responsible way that has come along now is
 8 dual use of the solar farm site.
 9 And this solar developer here in Knox
 10 County has now come forward with a very solid proposal
 11 and a agreement to continue the agricultural use on
 12 this site.
 13 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 14 Q Okay. But the people in the city of
 15 Columbus don't have to wake up in the morning and look
 16 through their windows at solar panels, do they?
 17 A Well, they may have them in their own
 18 backyard. I don't know that.
 19 Q Maybe one or two in their backyard?
 20 A Yeah.
 21 Q Would they have to look outside of their
 22 windows at hundreds of acres of solar panels every
 23 morning when they get up?
 24 A Well, again, if you allow me to answer --
 25 Q -- answer my questions. Can you answer my

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1 question?
 2 A Well, but your assumption is -- is that this
 3 is somehow an impeachment on them to have to look out
 4 at solar panels. And I'm saying it's a far greater
 5 impingement on the people who will be suffering from
 6 hunger 50 years from now if the climate crisis goes
 7 unabated.
 8 The scientific consensus is that there will
 9 be massive increases in drought. There will be 50
 10 million more hungry people on the planet by the middle
 11 of the century.
 12 I say that's a greater impingement on the
 13 rights of those people for survival on this planet
 14 than whether we're looking out a field of solar
 15 panels.
 16 Q Well, what about the city of --
 17 JUDGE HICKS: Mr. Van Kley, I'm going
 18 to -- I think you made your point here. We need to
 19 keep things moving.
 20 MR. VAN KLEY: Okay. Very good. Thank
 21 you, Your Honor.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Up next is Kathy Gamble,
 23 and on deck is Beth Bartley.
 24 Ms. Gamble, are you an intervenor in
 25 the case?

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1 MS. GAMBLE: No, sir.
 2 JUDGE HICKS: Okay Please raise your
 3 right hand.
 4 WHEREUPON,
 5 KATHY GAMBLE,
 6 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 7 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 8 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 10 spell your name for the record.
 11 THE WITNESS: Kathy, K-A-T-H-Y, Gamble,
 12 G-A-M-B-L-E.
 13 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Could you please
 14 provide your address with any township?
 15 THE WITNESS: 16434 Murray Road, Mount
 16 Vernon, Ohio, Pleasant Township.
 17 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 18 within the project area?
 19 THE WITNESS: I'm not sure.
 20 JUDGE HICKS: Okay.
 21 THE WITNESS: I'll explain.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 23 with your testimony.
 24 THE WITNESS: I'm just over the line in
 25 Pleasant Township from Miller.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Okay.
 2 THE WITNESS: I'm two miles, so I'm not
 3 whether I'm in the area or not. But I'm real close.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go.
 5 THE WITNESS: I also own property in
 6 Clinton Township, but I don't live there.
 7 JUDGE HICKS: Please proceed.
 8 DIRECT STATEMENT
 9 THE WITNESS: I'm a lifetime resident
 10 of Knox County with family going back to 1818. I grew
 11 up on a poultry farm. I currently live in Pleasant
 12 Township where I've resided for 46 years.
 13 I'm retired from the Ohio State
 14 University Extension in Knox County. Prior to my work
 15 with OSU, I was employed by the Ohio Farm Bureau
 16 Federation in Knox and Holmes County. I worked in
 17 support of the agriculture community for nearly 40
 18 years.
 19 I want to begin, briefly, by covering
 20 my feelings about private property rights. Frasier
 21 Solar project is leased from private property owners.
 22 It's their right to use their land as they see fit as
 23 long as it doesn't threaten the health and safety of
 24 their neighbors.
 25 I've read numerous studies from the

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1 Ohio Department of Health and North Carolina
 2 Department of Health, various universities, a variety
 3 of medical associations, and have found no health
 4 risks from the solar panels low level EMFs or the
 5 underground wires.
 6 And I have references here. But for
 7 the sake of time, I won't go into that.
 8 Back to the private property rights.
 9 They are constitutional rights. And in our
 10 capitalistic system, anyone who owns property is
 11 entitled to any value associated with that property.
 12 But Frasier Solar would not only serve the landowners,
 13 but everyone's interest.
 14 The entire Knox County community would
 15 be served by the tax benefits, the payment in lieu of
 16 taxes. There'd be over 286,000 annually that would go
 17 to the Knox County General Fund. The Mount Vernon
 18 city schools would benefit from a little over 488,000
 19 annually.
 20 And that money does not negatively
 21 impact the school's state funding formulas. The pilot
 22 is purely additive and insulates the school from
 23 changing valuations in local incomes.
 24 The remainder of the 1.1 million annual
 25 income would go to other taxing bodies. Another way

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1 Frasier serves the interest of Knox County in Ohio is
 2 during the construction period. Hundreds of jobs will
 3 be created and 70 percent of those jobs are required
 4 to be filled by Ohio workers.
 5 Recently, Frasier Solar has signed a
 6 letter of intent with a Knox County-based company, New
 7 Slate Land Management, to use sheep grazing for
 8 vegetation management at the project site, thus
 9 creating jobs for local sheep farmers.
 10 The jobs and agriculture production
 11 from the sheep grazing at Frasier will generate --
 12 would be a boost to our local economy.
 13 Sheep grazing on solar farms can be an
 14 economic triple win, generating income from three
 15 revenue systems: leasing out the land for panel
 16 installation, grazing contracts with local shepherds,
 17 and agriculture products produced by the sheep, such
 18 as lamb meat.
 19 Ohio in-state generation does not meet
 20 consumer demand. It doesn't now, and demand is only
 21 going to increase. Ohio typically imports about
 22 one-fifth to one-fourth of electricity it needs each
 23 year from other states and Canada by way of the grid.
 24 Energy produced by Frasier will be
 25 supplied into the transmission system and used locally

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1 and regionally. Not only will Knox County benefit,
 2 but all of Ohio will benefit from Frasier Solar
 3 project because it will be clean, locally generated
 4 electricity.
 5 In closing, I want to thank you for the
 6 opportunity to speak in favor of Frasier Solar.
 7 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 8 Any questions from counsel?
 9 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 10 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 11 Q Do you have any relationship with any
 12 land -- anyone who is leasing land in the solar
 13 project?
 14 A I have a friend that is leasing land. Yes.
 15 Q Okay. Are you receiving any benefit
 16 directly or indirectly from his lease with Frasier?
 17 A No.
 18 MR. WIEGEL: Okay. Thank you.
 19 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 20 Up next is Beth Bartley, and on deck is
 21 Yancy Shaw.
 22 MS. BARTLEY: My name is Beth Bartley.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Ms. Bartley, are you an
 24 intervenor in the case?
 25 MS. BARTLEY: Yes, I am.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. We are going to
 2 ask that you wait till those that are not intervenors
 3 are able to testify, as we had said at the beginning.
 4 So we are going to run through everyone that is not an
 5 intervenor, and we'll circle back to you.
 6 MS. BARTLEY: Okay. Why am I not
 7 allowed to testify now?
 8 JUDGE HICKS: This is the only
 9 opportunity that non-intervenors have to provide
 10 testimony, so we are going to let them get through
 11 first. You will have an opportunity to testify.
 12 As I said at the beginning in my intro,
 13 non-intervenors are going to get to go first. We will
 14 circle back to any intervenors.
 15 So up now will be Yancy Shaw, and on
 16 deck is Jill, I believe, Grubb. My apologies if
 17 that's wrong.
 18 Mr. Shaw, are you an intervenor in the
 19 case?
 20 MR. SHAW: I am not.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 22 right hand.
 23 //
 24 //
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 YANCY SHAW,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 7 spell your name for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: Yancy Shaw, Y-A-N-C-Y
 9 S-H-A-W. Home address, 7418 South State Route 231,
 10 Tiffin, Ohio. Work address, 152 Dorchester Square,
 11 Westerville, Ohio.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Do you live or work
 13 within the project area?
 14 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 16 with your testimony.
 17 DIRECT STATEMENT
 18 THE WITNESS: I'm a member of the Ohio
 19 Laborers, a representative of the Laborers' District
 20 Council. And our expectations is to have our members
 21 that live in this area and the state working to build
 22 this project, along with keeping the maintenance of it
 23 and all aspects of the solar field once it's in
 24 operational.
 25 Our members will make a good living

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1 wage with top-notch benefits, pension benefits,
 2 healthcare, all while contributing to the community.
 3 The laborers also have Drexel J. Thrash Training
 4 Center here in Knox County, out by Howard, Ohio.
 5 We have 119 acres there that we train
 6 our laborers all year long. Obviously, we have a
 7 solar training class there. We have 40 full time
 8 employees there that work year-round.
 9 And we take, you know, thousands of our
 10 members -- we have 16,000 members in the state.
 11 Thousands of them go through the training center each
 12 year. And so that is why we are in support of this
 13 project. Thank you.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
 15 counsel?
 16 Mr. Van Kley?
 17 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 18 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 19 Q What is your county of residence?
 20 A Seneca.
 21 Q Seneca?
 22 A Yeah.
 23 Q And with regard to the electricians that
 24 come to work on solar projects such as this one, are
 25 those electricians typically novices in their trade?

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1 A I can't speak on behalf of an electrician.
 2 Q Okay. What does your union do?
 3 A We build anything we can: roads, bridges,
 4 airports, solar field, pipeline.
 5 Q Okay. I was wondering because you were
 6 talking about how you train people for your trades.
 7 And do you typically send people from your trades who
 8 have just been trained in those trades to work on the
 9 solar projects?
 10 A Both, yes.
 11 Q Okay. Thanks.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Up now is Jill Grubb, and
 13 on deck is Erin Salva.
 14 Ms. Grubb, are you an intervenor in the
 15 case?
 16 MS. GRUBB: No. What is an intervenor?
 17 JUDGE HICKS: I'm going to take that as
 18 a no. It's someone who has intervened to officially
 19 participate as a party. If you could please raise
 20 your right hand.
 21 WHEREUPON,
 22 JILL GRUBB,
 23 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 24 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 25 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Can you please state and
 2 spell your name for the record?
 3 THE WITNESS: J-I-L-L G-R-U-B-B.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: And could you please
 5 provide your address including any township.
 6 THE WITNESS: 405 East Woodside Drive,
 7 in the village of Gambier, Precinct 3. I don't know
 8 what --
 9 JUDGE HICKS: May need to lean in just
 10 a little closer to make. It may be hard to pick up.
 11 And do you live or work within the
 12 project area?
 13 THE WITNESS: No.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 15 DIRECT STATEMENT
 16 THE WITNESS: Okay. I moved here nine
 17 years ago from Morrow County where I was a teacher.
 18 We got solar panels on our roof shortly after.
 19 We couldn't afford it, but we did
 20 because we have children and grandchildren and wanted
 21 to change conditions because our country was being so
 22 slow in addressing climate change.
 23 My realm is beyond this area. It goes
 24 to California and Colorado, where I have children and
 25 grandchildren who have been faced with fires caused by

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1 climate change.
 2 I am for Frasier Solar. Banning solar
 3 denies farmers their right to make their own decisions
 4 for their use of land, period.
 5 Two, the parties opposed to solar have
 6 misrepresented the dangers. Their motives are
 7 questionable. Many seem connected with housing
 8 developments, not pristine farmland.
 9 Furthermore, it is clear that animals
 10 and solar panels do well together, as we see with
 11 sheep and goats grazing near and under panels. Out
 12 west, cattle graze under windmills.
 13 Three, there is a glaring absence of
 14 information on the use of fossil fuels. Carbon
 15 dioxide and methane, which is 80 percent more
 16 dangerous than carbon dioxide, are behind global
 17 warming and air pollution, causing major harm
 18 worldwide.
 19 Fossil fuels were known to cause horrid
 20 consequences decades ago by their own studies, which
 21 were released in the 70s. But their advocates kept
 22 pushing their products, raking in profits, and trying
 23 to prevent cleaner alternatives.
 24 Four, most important to me, my
 25 grandchildren, your grandchildren, and the peoples of

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1 the world are already experiencing mass fires, floods,
 2 droughts, storms, rising and warming seas, melting
 3 glaciers, changing wind and ocean currents, and
 4 massive migrations by people who have to find livable
 5 places.
 6 That will affect all of us. Let us
 7 actively support clean energy sources to preserve our
 8 globe as stewards of the Earth. Thank you.
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
 10 counsel?
 11 Thank you for your testimony.
 12 Up now is Erin Salva, and I apologize
 13 if I mispronounce that. On deck is Janet Chandler.
 14 Ms. Salva, are you an intervenor in the
 15 case?
 16 MS. SALVA: No, I am not.
 17 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 18 right hand.
 19 WHEREUPON,
 20 ERIN SALVA,
 21 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 22 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 23 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 24 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 25 spell your name for the record.

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1 THE WITNESS: Erin, E-R-I-N, Salva,
 2 S-A-L-V-A. And I live at 9301 Green Valley Road,
 3 Mount Vernon. It's Wayne Township.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: Do you live or work in
 5 the project area?
 6 THE WITNESS: No.
 7 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 8 DIRECT STATEMENT
 9 THE WITNESS: I reside on a small
 10 family farm. I grew up in an urban area before moving
 11 to Ohio in my late teens, and so I have a very deep
 12 appreciation for agriculture, especially on small
 13 family farms.
 14 I'm a backyard beekeeper and a founding
 15 member of the Knox County Community Garden Initiative.
 16 For the past two years, I've been teaching students in
 17 K6 classrooms about where their food comes from and
 18 how to grow fruits and vegetables.
 19 This is very rewarding work but also
 20 frustrating as I see more and more rural farms in Knox
 21 County being sold to developers for residential
 22 housing developments.
 23 Opponents of utility-scale solar farms
 24 would have us believe that putting solar on farmland
 25 threatens to reduce our agricultural land; however,

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1 the single and largest cause of lost farmland is from
 2 housing development, especially sprawl where single
 3 homes are built on large tracts of prior farmland.
 4 These housing developments take
 5 farmland permanently out of agricultural production.
 6 And once a solar project is decommissioned, however,
 7 the land can be returned to agricultural use.
 8 I was excited to learn that the Frasier
 9 Solar project will be employing the agrivoltaics that
 10 will use the sheep from nearby sheep farms in Knox
 11 County.
 12 This dual-use model involves solar
 13 energy installations that provide agricultural land
 14 beneath or between rows of photovoltaic cells and
 15 panels.
 16 Solar sites can also host honeybees
 17 along with grazing sheep. Beekeeping at solar sites
 18 can enhance the value of the land by keeping it in
 19 agricultural production, providing new streams of
 20 income for local farmers and adding environmental
 21 benefits including enhanced soil health due to the
 22 presence of native and non-invasive vegetation that
 23 the project will be using to create natural perimeter
 24 fencing and buffer zones around the sites.
 25 Harvesting solar energy while grazing

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1 sheep on solar sites can both help to maintain the
 2 rural landscape and add additional income streams that
 3 will help local farmers keep their farmland in
 4 production.
 5 The Frasier Solar project will be sited
 6 on 840 acres of and on five different tracts. The
 7 project's acreage totals just .6 percent of the
 8 tillable farmland in Knox County.
 9 Contrary to the opposition's claims
 10 that farmland will be lost to solar developments,
 11 these projects can preserve farmland by enabling small
 12 family farmers to keep their farms intact and viable.
 13 I'm an advocate of preserving farmland
 14 in Knox County through dual-use solar installations
 15 like the Frasier Solar project. I also support the
 16 freedom and the rights of farmers who choose to engage
 17 in sustainable land use that benefits their land.
 18 Harvesting solar energy will both
 19 generate alternative renewable energy and help local
 20 farmers maintain their farms. This is clearly a
 21 win-win that is in the best interest of the people of
 22 Knox County. Thanks.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 24 Any questions from counsel?
 25 Thank you for your testimony.

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1 Up now is Janet Chandler, and on deck
 2 is Charles Bonsell.
 3 Ms. Chandler, are you an intervenor in
 4 the case?
 5 MS. CHANDLER: I am not.
 6 THE COURT: Okay. Please raise your right hand.
 7 WHEREUPON,
 8 JANET CHANDLER,
 9 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 10 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 11 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 13 your name for the record.
 14 THE WITNESS: Janet, J-A-N-E-T,
 15 Chandler, C-H-A-N-D-L-E-R.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide
 17 your address including any township.
 18 THE WITNESS: Yes. 16 Highland Drive
 19 in Mount Vernon, Ohio. I'm in the city of Mount
 20 Vernon.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
 22 work in the project area?
 23 THE WITNESS: Well, I live in Mount
 24 Vernon, so --
 25 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead

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1 with your testimony.

2 DIRECT STATEMENT

3 THE WITNESS: Sure. Good evening.

4 Thank you for your time and attention this evening.

5 I'm a resident of Mount Vernon.

6 I'm retired from the behavioral health

7 field, but since retirement, I became active as a Ohio

8 volunteer -- certified volunteer naturalist, and I've

9 been volunteering in the Knox County Park District for

10 the last five years.

11 So I'm speaking to you this evening

12 with concern for our environment in Knox County. I've

13 been following the proposed Frasier project for

14 several years.

15 I attended a couple of their required

16 public meetings. And last November, I also attended

17 the meeting held here sponsored by an opposition

18 group.

19 Because I care deeply about a healthy

20 environment, I was very alarmed to hear at that

21 meeting many of the opposition claims. Claims like

22 heavy metals would be leaching into our soil and water

23 honestly scared me. I wanted to learn more.

24 Well, I easily found a lot of the

25 claims on the internet that had been made at the

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1 meeting. However, in digging down, I found that these

2 claims were not backed by credible sources or

3 reputable studies.

4 I realized that the opposition group at

5 this meeting had cherry-picked their information.

6 Their information was not comprehensive, nor was it

7 based in real science. The scenarios about solar that

8 they were promoting seemed to be designed not to

9 inform, but to make people frightened.

10 It had worked with me. And I'm

11 concerned that it seemed to be working with a lot of

12 my neighbors.

13 In further educating myself, I also

14 came to recognize that the issue of climate change is

15 central to this controversy. The opposition town hall

16 argued that human-caused climate change is a hoax.

17 But as you are undoubtedly aware, the

18 most recent IPCC report began with a statement: "Human

19 activities, principally through emissions of

20 greenhouse gases, have unequivocally caused global

21 warming."

22 Current estimates are that 97 to 99

23 percent of climate scientists, those scientists who

24 actually publish in reputable journals related to

25 climate, agree with this consensus. So clearly

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1 climate change is a crisis. And if we are responsible

2 citizens, we will take action to address this crisis.

3 I thought that maybe community solar,

4 that is, solar on rooftops, parking lots, brown

5 fields, might be the answer. However, current

6 analysis indicates that if we are to meet our future

7 renewable energy needs, utility-scale solar is

8 essential.

9 Community solar alone is inadequate to

10 the task. And further, the cost of community solar is

11 two to four times more expensive than utility-scale

12 solar.

13 For these two reasons, we need to

14 support both utility-scale solar so that we are

15 ensuring both adequate electricity and ensuring that

16 we have electricity at a price that's affordable to

17 most everyone sitting in this room.

18 Despite how divided our community may

19 seem, I believe that we all can agree underneath that

20 the project should be required to have high health and

21 safety standards.

22 It is significant that the Siting Board

23 staff report clearly recognized these health, safety,

24 and environmental concerns, and that they've laid our

25 stringent conditions to ensure that these will be

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1 addressed in the final contracts.

2 I encourage you, therefore, as siting

3 board members, to confirm the staff recommendation and

4 approve the project. Our community in the county will

5 have much to gain from this and future solar

6 development.

7 Why would we turn away additional

8 stable sources of funding for our schools and for

9 other services which strengthen our quality of life?

10 Why would we want to restrict the future amount of

11 electricity available or cause it to become more

12 expensive?

13 Why would we not support a project that

14 will keep the land in food production while generating

15 electricity? And why not confirm our shared value

16 that respects private property rights, especially when

17 this project will not harm our health or safety?

18 This project just makes a lot of common

19 sense. I would actually be very proud to be a citizen

20 in this community that demonstrates how it cares by

21 contributing in our own small ways to creating a

22 better world for our children and our grandchildren.

23 Thank you.

24 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you. Perfectly

25 timed.

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1 Any questions from counsel?
 2 MR. SETTINERI: Quick question, Ms.
 3 Chandler.
 4 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 5 BY MR. SETTINERI:
 6 Q You mentioned for the record -- to clarify
 7 an opposition group in your testimony a few times. Do
 8 you know the name of that opposition group?
 9 A I believe the one that sponsored the first
 10 meeting that I was at that they called the town hall
 11 was Knox Smart Development.
 12 MR. SETTINERI: No further questions.
 13 Thank you, Your Honor.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 15 Thank you for your testimony.
 16 Up now is Charles Bonsell, and on deck
 17 is Sarah Goslee Reed.
 18 Mr. Bonsell, are you an intervenor in
 19 the case?
 20 MR. BONSELL: No, I'm not.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please raise
 22 your right hand.
 23 //
 24 //
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 CHARLES BONSELL,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 7 your name for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: Okay. Charles,
 9 C-H-A-R-L-E-S, Bonsell, B-O-N-S-E-L-L.
 10 JUDGE HICKS: Can you please provide
 11 your address including any township.
 12 THE WITNESS: 12561 Sycamore Road,
 13 Mount Vernon.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 15 in the project area?
 16 THE WITNESS: Yes, I do. It borders on
 17 my property, the solar field and the easement for the
 18 collector lines, a total of probably about a mile and
 19 a half.
 20 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 21 with your testimony.
 22 DIRECT STATEMENT
 23 THE WITNESS: My family and I operate a
 24 multi-generational farm in Miller Township. Our
 25 property has been in the same family for 190 years,

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1 thus my passion for the land has very deep roots.
 2 As is the case with many farmers across
 3 the country, we have been offered the opportunity to
 4 lease our farm to the solar industry. Additionally,
 5 we have been asked to sign a good neighbor agreement
 6 for an adjacent farm which has already been leased to
 7 a solar vendor.
 8 Thus far, we have not leased our farm
 9 to any solar vendor, nor signed the good neighbor
 10 agreement.
 11 I'm a firm believer of personal
 12 property rights. This includes respecting a fellow
 13 landowner's choice to lease his land, providing he is
 14 compliance with local zoning regulations, acts
 15 reasonably, and acts lawfully.
 16 Any landowner who has decided to -- he
 17 wants solar has likely thought the decision through in
 18 detail and determined that the plan to be is the best
 19 path forward for his family.
 20 If you deny the current solar project
 21 to go forward, you're denying the property rights of
 22 the landowner. Many large companies are desperately
 23 trying to find renewable energy sources and many have
 24 set schedules for transitioning away from fossil
 25 fuels.

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1 The Clean Energy Buyer's Association,
 2 or CEBA, has 400 large customers who have vowed to
 3 make the switch. There is a large demand for solar
 4 energy. Our neighbors at Intel have repeatedly made
 5 the same claim and may even be a member of CEBA.
 6 My family and I hope you board members
 7 will make decisions independently, based on thoroughly
 8 researching the issues involved, and make the right
 9 long-term decision for Ohio.
 10 Obviously, there is a lot of
 11 misinformation circulating about solar. The solar
 12 opposition is well funded by folks in competing
 13 industries. The loudest and strongest players in
 14 these types of forums are not always on the right side
 15 of issues.
 16 Given your high standing and wide
 17 authority, we are depending on you to use good
 18 judgment in this critical decision. Your decision
 19 needs to be based on accurate, hard, and indisputable
 20 facts.
 21 Change is never easy, nor embraced.
 22 But leaders are expected to take the high road and do
 23 what is best for the long run. This case and others
 24 like it coming up will probably be the most important
 25 decisions your tenure on the Ohio Power Siting Board.

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1 Your decisions will deeply influence
 2 many lives and impact Ohio's power systems for years
 3 to come. Thank you for your time.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 5 Any questions from counsel?
 6 Go ahead.
 7 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 8 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 9 Q Just to clarify, you said you were an
 10 adjacent property owner?
 11 A Yes, I do.
 12 Q How many acres do you own personally?
 13 A Just 200.
 14 Q Two-hundred? Do you have any easements for
 15 the property on your --
 16 A No. No. We have signed nothing, as I
 17 stated in this.
 18 Q But did you testify that Frasier and Open
 19 Roads asked to --
 20 A Yes, they did. Yes, they did.
 21 Q How much money did they offer you?
 22 A How much what? Money --
 23 Q How much money per acre did they offer you?
 24 A I'm not sure that I want to answer that. Is
 25 that --

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1 Q How much money per acre did they offer you?
 2 A It was good.
 3 Q How much money per acre did they offer you?
 4 MR. SETTINERI: At this time, I would
 5 object that it be confidential.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: There may be -- I'm
 7 not --
 8 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry. If you want
 9 to make an objection, can you please come up to the
 10 microphone so I can get it on record?
 11 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor, we
 12 object -- that information to be confidential.
 13 MR. WIEGEL: We would argue he didn't
 14 sign anything, and he testified that he was offered
 15 the lease.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: The bench is not aware of
 17 what may have been signed, discussed, anything.
 18 You've asked the question; he's provided an answer.
 19 Let's try to -- you can ask him again and then we'll
 20 move on.
 21 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 22 Q So this is your testimony that you don't
 23 want to tell --
 24 A Don't want to lease.
 25 Q Well, you don't want to disclose how much

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1 you were offered per acre to lease your land to
 2 Frasier Solar.
 3 A I don't think that's a good question,
 4 really. And that -- granted, I didn't sign. But I'm
 5 not going to answer that.
 6 MR. WIEGEL: Okay.
 7 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 8 Mr. Van Kley?
 9 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 10 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 11 Q Just to be clear then, have you informed the
 12 solar company that you will not sign under any
 13 circumstances, or are you still negotiating with them?
 14 A I'm not negotiating with them. And I made
 15 it pretty clear that at this point in time I'm not
 16 interested in leasing.
 17 Q Okay. "At this point in time," does that
 18 mean in the future you may be interested in signing
 19 with them?
 20 A It could be. But probably not. I -- it
 21 really didn't fit into my plans, really, with the
 22 property. It was going to take up my hay ground. And
 23 a lot of my ground is best suited for grazing.
 24 And with the loss of that, it would
 25 interfere with running cattle on the proper 'cause I

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1 wouldn't have enough hay. So that was really the
 2 reason. They wanted to lease about a half of my
 3 property, which was the remote part of the property.
 4 But it was going to take my hay ground, like I said.
 5 Q Okay. So they wanted to purchase a lease to
 6 put some solar equipment on your property?
 7 A Solar panels. Yes.
 8 Q Okay. Have they offered an agreement in
 9 which they would pay you money in exchange for your
 10 either supporting the project or agreeing not to
 11 oppose the project?
 12 A They offered the good neighbor agreement,
 13 and there was compensation for that. That's correct.
 14 Q Did you sign that?
 15 A No, I did not.
 16 Q Do you intend to?
 17 A Not at this point in time. I don't see a
 18 need to.
 19 JUDGE HICKS: Mr. Van Kley, I think we
 20 are treading ground that has already been answered
 21 here. So please --
 22 MR. VAN KLEY: Thank you.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 24 Up now is Sarah Goslee Reed, and on
 25 deck is Joe Lennon.

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1 Ms. Reed, are you an intervenor in the
 2 case?
 3 MS. REED: I am not.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Could you please
 5 raise your right hand.
 6 WHEREUPON,
 7 SARAH GOSLEE REED,
 8 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 9 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 10 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 12 spell your name for the record.
 13 THE WITNESS: My name is Sarah,
 14 S-A-R-A-H, Goslee, G-O-S-L-E-E, Reed, R-E-E-D.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide
 16 your address with any township?
 17 THE WITNESS: 1102 New Gambier Road.
 18 That's Mount Vernon. And we are a little bit, I
 19 guess, in Pleasant Township.
 20 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 21 in the project area?
 22 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 24 DIRECT STATEMENT
 25 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

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1 Good evening. Thank you very much for
 2 allowing us to speak today. I have been a resident of
 3 Knox County since 1984. As human beings on Earth, we
 4 are all consumers. It is nearly impossible to avoid
 5 having a carbon footprint.
 6 I believe it is my responsibility and
 7 obligation to preserve this planet in such a condition
 8 that it provides my children, grandchildren, and
 9 future generations beyond with clean water for
 10 drinking and swimming; with pesticide- and
 11 herbicide-free food for healthy eating; and with
 12 unpolluted air for filling their lungs so they can
 13 explore our world's forest and oceans full of a rich
 14 variety of wildlife.
 15 Because of this philosophy, my year ago
 16 my husband and I installed 20 solar panels on our roof
 17 with the idea of lowering our carbon footprint and of
 18 making our house more appealing to the next owner.
 19 We now have an electric bill that is
 20 one-fourth of what it was previously, and today the
 21 bill I received was for \$2.95 for the past month.
 22 Even on cloudy days, our solar panels
 23 generate electricity, and we often have a negative
 24 kilowatt-hour usage, meaning that we are putting more
 25 power into the grid than we are using.

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1 It is quiet and efficient, and it seems
 2 almost silly to me to not take advantage of the sun
 3 and the energy it offers. Commercial solar power
 4 provides another opportunity for all of our
 5 descendants to have the above-mentioned quality of
 6 life.
 7 Farmers are often paid by the
 8 government to not plant their fields. Over time, the
 9 land may lie unused and unproductive. Farmers do have
 10 the right to decide how their land is used.
 11 With Frasier Solar, this land can be
 12 utilized to produce energy for the power grid, making
 13 the land more valuable. Frasier Solar's policy is
 14 that sheep graze on that land, benefitting from the
 15 shade the panels provide and, in the process,
 16 fertilize it and improve the soil.
 17 The soil panels can only be located
 18 where there is access to transmission lines and only a
 19 small amount, about one-half of one percent, of our
 20 county's farmland would be utilized in this fashion.
 21 Farmers sign a 40-year lease with
 22 Frasier Solar, and when that lease expires, the panel
 23 and equipment are removed and the land goes back into
 24 production, fertilized by the sheep and conditioned to
 25 produce better crops.

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1 Farms across the state and county are
 2 being permanently lost or diminished due to
 3 development. But through partnership with Frasier
 4 Solar, the farm remains.
 5 I frequently drive into neighboring
 6 communities, to Grandville and to Chillicothe in
 7 southern Ohio. And I see solar panels on the edges of
 8 these towns. I think to myself, what smart,
 9 progressive people live here. And I know Knox County
 10 is just as smart and just as progressive.
 11 Please show me that I am right by
 12 protecting our planet's valuable resources for
 13 generations to come and support Frasier Solar, as I
 14 do. Thank you.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 16 Any questions from counsel.
 17 Mr. Van Kley?
 18 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 19 Q Where did you obtain the statements that you
 20 included in your testimony tonight?
 21 A Where did I obtain the statements?
 22 Q Yeah. Where did you get the information?
 23 What did you read to get the information included in
 24 your speech?
 25 A I read a flyer, a brochure from Frasier

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1 Solar, and I also received an email from a friend who
 2 -- not -- well, a friend and person who supplied us
 3 with solar panels, NH3 Solar.
 4 Q Okay. Did anybody from Frasier Solar
 5 contact you and ask you to testify?
 6 A No.
 7 Q Okay. Thank you.
 8 A You're welcome. Thank you.
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Further questions?
 10 Thank you.
 11 Up now is Joe Lennon, and on deck is
 12 Cindy Lennon.
 13 Mr. Lennon, are you an intervenor in
 14 the case?
 15 MR. LENNON: No.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Please raise your right
 17 hand.
 18 WHEREUPON,
 19 JOE LENNON,
 20 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 21 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 22 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 24 your name for the record.
 25 THE WITNESS: My name is Joe Lennon,

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1 J-O-E L-E-N-N-O-N. I live at 318 Crabapple Drive in
 2 Howard, Ohio, in Howard Township.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 4 in the project area?
 5 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: All right. Please go
 7 ahead.
 8 DIRECT STATEMENT
 9 THE WITNESS: Okay. I oppose the
 10 Frasier Solar project. I believe that the solar
 11 panels and small wind generators are fine for
 12 homeowners. I also believe we don't look far enough
 13 into the future.
 14 Like the homeowners that put solar
 15 panels on their homes, if they decide to sell their
 16 homes later, now they have to sell the solar panels as
 17 well. And that creates less people that want to buy
 18 homes. So it devalues their homes.
 19 Utility-scale solar panels is a totally
 20 different ballgame. For individual solar on their
 21 homes, are we really looking far enough into the
 22 future? Construction jobs, sure, but they're
 23 short-term.
 24 Once the main construction is done,
 25 those jobs are gone. Sheep, farming around solar

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1 panels? Sheep are 24 a day lawnmowers. The foliage
 2 under the solar panels can't keep up because it will
 3 be depleted from the sunlight.
 4 Sheep eat 6 pounds of grass every day.
 5 That's one sheep. Can you imagine how much 6 pounds
 6 of grass is?
 7 The commercial that Frasier Solar runs
 8 on TV where the tractor is plowing a field, half the
 9 field is nice green grass; the other half is a
 10 perfectly tilled farmland. Where are the solar
 11 panels? I don't see any solar panels in those
 12 commercials.
 13 It's all theatrics. Are we not looking
 14 far enough into the future? My career job was as a
 15 chief engineering officer for the railroad. I was
 16 responsible for total track structure, including
 17 bridge structure and road crossings.
 18 I had to work the Federal Railroad
 19 Administration and the Ohio Department of
 20 Transportation Rail Division. I was responsible for
 21 millions and millions and millions of dollars in
 22 federal contracts.
 23 My territory went from Lake Erie, New
 24 Lexington, Ohio, and from Columbus, Ohio, to Mingo
 25 Junction, Pennsylvania. And Mount Vernon was just a

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1 little dot on my responsibility map.
 2 I'm very, very educated in water
 3 runoff, soil contamination. It's one of the biggest
 4 problems the railroad track structure had.
 5 I'm also -- I was a supervisor for a
 6 major plastics manufacturer that delivered plastics
 7 all over the world. I'm very aware of plastic
 8 contamination also, and there's 10 percent of the
 9 solar panels have plastics in them.
 10 Okay. Let's get back to are we really
 11 looking far enough into the future? Ohio produces 187
 12 barrels -- bushels of corn per acre. That's per acre.
 13 It -- one acre will produce 42,000
 14 pounds of strawberries. One acre will produce 25,000
 15 pounds of potatoes, 11,000 pounds of lettuce.
 16 Frasier has about a thousand acres
 17 under contract. IBV energy, about 900. That is a
 18 total of 3,555 bushels of corn or 79,000 -- 79,800,000
 19 pounds of strawberries, 48,000,260 pounds of potatoes,
 20 20,000,300 pounds of lettuce.
 21 I'd encourage you all, and all you
 22 young peoples, and all you old people alike, that if
 23 you vote for these solar panels, you are looking --
 24 you're not looking into the future, not very far. You
 25 are helping to deplete our food source --

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Mr. Lennon -- I'm going
 2 to -- we've hit your five minutes allotted time to
 3 testify. So if you have a statement, you can leave it
 4 with the court reporter.
 5 THE WITNESS: Okay. I didn't see my 30
 6 seconds go up.
 7 JUDGE HICKS: You were looking down
 8 when she was holding it up.
 9 THE WITNESS: Sorry. Okay.
 10 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
 11 counsel?
 12 Okay. Thank you for your testimony.
 13 Up now is Cindy Lennon, and on deck is
 14 Trina Trainor.
 15 Ms. Lennon, are you an intervenor in
 16 the case?
 17 MS. LENNON: No.
 18 WHEREUPON,
 19 CINDY LENNON,
 20 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 21 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 22 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please state
 24 and spell your name for the record.
 25 THE WITNESS: Cindy Lennon, C-I-N-D-Y

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1 L-E-N-N-O-N.
 2 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide
 3 your address including any township.
 4 THE WITNESS: 318 Crabapple Drive,
 5 Howard Township.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 7 in the project area?
 8 THE WITNESS: I don't live in the
 9 project area, but I do sell real estate and have
 10 listed and sold in the project area and hope to in the
 11 future.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 13 with your testimony.
 14 DIRECT STATEMENT
 15 THE WITNESS: Solar panels contain
 16 cadmium, which is highly toxic chemical. Exposure to
 17 cadmium is known to cause cancer and targets
 18 cardiovascular, renal, gastrointestinal, neurological,
 19 reproductive, and respiratory systems in the body.
 20 Another highly toxic chemical found in
 21 industrial panels is arsenic. Arsenic is very
 22 well-known toxin for causing a plethora of health
 23 problems, especially when water systems are -- become
 24 exposed.
 25 Which leads me to my next point. Solar

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1 panels are known for being easily damaged. Many
 2 industrial solar panels contain microcracks that go
 3 undetected.
 4 These microcracks may not seem
 5 dangerous for a single panel; however, when there are
 6 thousands of panels and thousands of undetected
 7 microcracks, that is incredibly dangerous.
 8 Ohio is also very well known for having
 9 frequent hail and thunderstorms. Hail damages solar
 10 panels, creating cracks. Those cracks then leak
 11 highly toxic chemicals into the land. This poses a
 12 substantial risk to our drinking water, wildlife, and
 13 contamination of natural flowing water.
 14 As the recent weather has shown, Ohio
 15 is also known for having rains that lead to flooding,
 16 which again, drives home the point that solar panels
 17 are very dangerous and high risk for environmental
 18 contamination.
 19 There is extreme validation in having
 20 concern that these solar panels have a great potential
 21 to catch fire. Ohio has high rates of thunderstorms.
 22 As mentioned above, the risk of lightning striking
 23 hundreds and even thousands of acres of land overtaken
 24 by solar panels significantly poses risk.
 25 And the result of lightning striking

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1 and debris catching fire due to high temperatures,
 2 heavy toxins will be released into the atmosphere.
 3 Not only will the fumes hurt wildlife
 4 and livestock, but it also poses an astronomical
 5 threat to safety and wellbeing of our public servants
 6 who are first responders.
 7 The risk to -- the risks do not
 8 outweigh the benefits. Industrial solar does not
 9 create a safe environment for our children and
 10 community.
 11 Industrial solar is highly inconvenient
 12 and not necessary and not in the public's best
 13 interest. And I'm opposed to the solar project.
 14 Thank you.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 16 Any questions from counsel?
 17 Thank you for your testimony.
 18 Up now is Trina Trainor, and on deck is
 19 Drenda Keesee.
 20 JUDGE HICKS: Are you an intervenor in
 21 the case?
 22 MR. TRAINOR: No.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Please raise your right
 24 hand.
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 TRINA TRAINOR,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 7 your name for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: Trina, T-R-I-N-A, last
 9 name Trainor, T-R-A-I-N-O-R.
 10 JUDGE HICKS: And please provide your
 11 address with any township.
 12 THE WITNESS: 92 Crabapple Court,
 13 Howard, Ohio, Howard Township, Knox County.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 15 in the project area?
 16 THE WITNESS: I work near the project
 17 area.
 18 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 19 DIRECT STATEMENT
 20 THE WITNESS: Weather plays a critical
 21 role in solar fields in Ohio. We've had 17 confirmed
 22 tornadoes in Ohio as of mid-March. And you've seen
 23 the weather the last few days. Let's keep in mind
 24 that solar panels are weather-resistant, not
 25 weatherproof.

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1 With this in mind and coupled with the
 2 lack of sun here, this is a terrible idea to think
 3 that the weather -- that we can weather the storm for
 4 the next 40 years without incident.
 5 I attended a recent city council
 6 meeting in which several city council members said
 7 they were hearing about this project for the first
 8 time. This was just several weeks ago. Craig Adair
 9 from Open Road Renewables apologized that this was the
 10 first time he was speaking to them about the project.
 11 After hearing brief testimony from both
 12 sides, council quickly went to a vote, waiving three
 13 readings and unanimously voted against the Frasier
 14 project. It has approximately 100 acres within the
 15 city limits. The newly formed sheep grazing idea was
 16 also represented during the meeting, for the record.
 17 As the executive director of the Mount
 18 Vernon Music and Arts Festival, I am very concerned
 19 about the economic impact of the arts in our community
 20 as well. Our community has worked extremely hard to
 21 develop a robust rural art community, and we'd like to
 22 keep it that way.
 23 Dreamland versus reality. Take a look
 24 at what has happened in Morrow County and most
 25 recently in Texas. Thank you.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 2 Any questions from counsel?
 3 Thank you for your testimony.
 4 Up now is Drenda Keesee, and on deck is
 5 Wendy Cagle. I might have pronounced that one, so I'm
 6 sorry.
 7 Ms. Keesee, are you an intervenor in
 8 the case?
 9 MS. KEESEE: I'm not.
 10 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 11 right hand.
 12 WHEREUPON,
 13 DRENDA KEESEE,
 14 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 15 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 16 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 17 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 18 spell your name for the record.
 19 THE WITNESS: D-R-E-N-D-A, Drenda,
 20 K-E-E-S-E-E, Keesee.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide
 22 your address and any township.
 23 THE WITNESS: Yes. 6040 Sharp Road,
 24 Mount Vernon, Ohio.
 25 JUDGE HICKS: And township or no?

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1 THE WITNESS: Yes, Miller Township.
 2 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
 3 work in the project area?
 4 THE WITNESS: Absolutely, all around
 5 me.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 7 with your testimony.
 8 DIRECT STATEMENT
 9 THE WITNESS: All right. I know we all
 10 have heard more about solar panels than we ever wanted
 11 to know in our entire life. We're sorry this project
 12 ever came this direction.
 13 The Mount Vernon News stated that Knox
 14 County election result indicate a public referendum on
 15 industrial solar development in Knox County. Usually
 16 a sleepy primary, elections were energized by the
 17 solar debate. And the voters sent a clear message
 18 against industrial solar development.
 19 I am one of two Knox County likely
 20 commissioners-elect who reflect our community's
 21 opposition to the development of the Frasier Solar
 22 utility project.
 23 The recent Knox County republican
 24 primary is a referendum against farmland solar as
 25 quoted in the Mount Vernon News article: "Knox County

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 114</p> <p>1 voters reject solar in county commissioner elections." 2 Solar was the major issue in our race. 3 The election represents a public outcry 4 against this Frasier Solar project. Bob Phillips and 5 I are both anti-solar candidates who took close to 70 6 percent of the vote, a whopping almost 5,000 votes 7 over the pro-solar incumbent Thom Collier. 8 In the other commissioner's race, an 9 anti-solar candidate, Barry Lester, won, whom you've 10 heard from. 11 Is this not all the proof you need to 12 register our community's rejection of this project? 13 Our community clearly voted against solar on farmland. 14 The games that are being played to try and convince 15 anyone otherwise are fabricated and unfortunately 16 bought and paid for by Frasier Solar. 17 In nine months, the two of us likely 18 newly elected commissioners will be responsible for 19 managing Knox County's grown and development. I will 20 be responsible for planning, leading, and enforcing 21 the public's mandates in a direction consistent with 22 Knox County's values and heritage. 23 I assure you that the Frasier Solar 24 project is not wanted nor needed in Knox County. It 25 is not compatible with our rural character, and it</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 116</p> <p>1 and safety at risk should the wind not blow or the sun 2 not shine or a tornado devastate, like the 10,000 3 acres of broken solar panels in Texas right now. And 4 let's be honest, Ohio's weather is not that 5 dependable, as we know today. 6 Last year we imported more agriculture 7 than exported for the very first time in American 8 history. This should be a red alert. Solar in Ohio 9 has only 10 to 12 percent efficiency, but 20 times the 10 land needed, as I stated. That's our farmland and 11 that's our food. 12 The Inflation Reduction Act funds this. 13 Our tax dollars are being used against us. The food 14 reduction act, it would be better called. 15 Financial Times newspaper featured an 16 article, which I have here. It pictures China's 17 President Xi with solar panels, lithium batteries, and 18 wind turbines, and states "The long term goal is a 19 world economic order that favors China." 20 I look forward to your decision to deny 21 Frasier Solar's application. Please grant our 22 request, and let us alone to manage our county and our 23 communities as we choose. The people of Knox County 24 have spoken. In any measure possible, they voted 25 against this. They voted out those who did not</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 115</p> <p>1 will interfere in our comprehensive plans for Knox 2 County. 3 And yes, we are witness to the damage 4 and harm Open Road Renewables LLC has done to other 5 Ohio communities that have been taking over by the 6 Hillcrest solar project in Brown County. 7 Only 10 to 12 percent thermal 8 efficiency -- have an article here: "Wind and solar 9 generation required 20 times as much land per unit of 10 power produced than coal or natural gas-fired power 11 plants, including land disturbed to produce and 12 transport the fossil fuels." 13 This is from "In Wyoming Cheap 14 Electricity is Gone with the Wind," by Daniel 15 Horowitz. 16 We really resent the mediocre and 17 incompetent solar developers that have been encouraged 18 by our government to come here to Ohio, mainly from 19 Texas, to destroy our lives, our homes, and 20 communities with their government subsidies and greed. 21 Prioritizing net zero over grid 22 reliability means that we're pushing our electric grid 23 to the edge. 24 The more we rely on weather-dependent 25 generation sources, the more we put our lives, health,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 117</p> <p>1 represent them in this solar debate. 2 As a likely new elected commissioner 3 with no opposition in the fall, I stand firmly with 4 the people of Knox County, the 17 township trustees' 5 resolutions, and the city council who all emphatically 6 said no to the blight on our farmland. Thank you. I 7 oppose the project. 8 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you, Ms. Keesee. 9 Thank you. We've hit your five minutes. 10 Thank you, folks. We need to carry on 11 here, please. 12 Mr. Settineri? 13 CROSS-EXAMINATION 14 BY MR. SETTINERI: 15 Q Good evening. Mike Settineri on behalf of 16 Frasier Solar. In running for office, you ran also on 17 issues of immigration, drugs, strengthening families, 18 and fighting for small business; correct? 19 A Those were minimally mentioned. Anyone that 20 heard any speech I gave, it was almost a hundred 21 percent calling out Thom Collier, the resolution that 22 commissioners made without the people's support. Is 23 that right? 24 JUDGE HICKS: Please, let's try not to 25 encourage.</p>

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1 THE WITNESS: Okay.

2 MR. SETTINERI: Yes, sir.

3 THE REPORTER: Excuse me. Could you

4 repeat what you were saying?

5 BY MR. SETTINERI:

6 Q You did run on those issues?

7 A I did not, and I've already answered.

8 Q Did you say you did?

9 A I said I did not run -- the issue I ran on

10 was anti-solar. I vaguely mentioned a couple of other

11 issues because we are commissioner. There are other

12 issues.

13 Q And those issues would have been listed in

14 your campaign ads in local papers; correct?

15 A Only in a couple newspaper articles.

16 Q Okay. Did you read the staff report that

17 was issued?

18 A I have glanced over the conditions. And I

19 can say that what I've seen thus far, I wouldn't trust

20 the conditions to be met because we've not been told

21 honestly other issues as well through this whole

22 two-and-a-half-year process.

23 Q Do you know how many conditions are in that

24 staff report?

25 A Sixty-something the last I saw it.

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1 Q That was a good answer. Sixty. Okay. And

2 you're aware that the Power Siting Board has a

3 compliance team?

4 A Yes, I am.

5 Q And same question I've asked previously, as

6 a county commissioner, will you base your decision on

7 passion?

8 A I will base it on the passion of the people

9 because that's who I'm elected to represent. And they

10 do not want solar in this county.

11 THE REPORTER: Excuse me. I cannot

12 hear her.

13 JUDGE HICKS: Folks, we can't -- the

14 court reporter cannot -- I'm guessing you may need to

15 repeat your answer.

16 I'm begging you, please do not cheer

17 when she repeats it.

18 THE WITNESS: I'm here to represent the

19 people and they do not want solar in Knox County.

20 BY MR. SETTINERI:

21 Q And would you base a decision on passion if

22 it's contrary to the law?

23 A Not contrary to law, but the law says that

24 we are to represent the we the people.

25 Q And listening to your testimony tonight, am

Page 120

1 I correct that you believe that utility-scale solar

2 does not belong in Ohio; correct?

3 A I'm sorry. Say that again.

4 Q Yeah. You believe that utility-scale solar

5 does not belong in Ohio; correct?

6 A I believe it does not belong in Knox County.

7 I'll let other trustees and commissioners decide for

8 their county. But I do not believe it is efficient.

9 10 to 12 percent efficiency is very low. To use 20

10 times the amount of land is a travesty to our food,

11 our future, and our farms.

12 MR. SETTINERI: No further questions.

13 Thank you.

14 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Settineri.

15 Up next is Wendy Cagle, and on deck is

16 Laurie Sutton.

17 Ms. Cagle, are you an intervenor in the

18 case?

19 MS. CAGLE: No.

20 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Pleas raise your

21 right hand.

22 //

23 //

24 //

25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,

2 WENDY CAGLE,

3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

6 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell

7 your name for the record.

8 THE WITNESS: My name is Wendy,

9 W-E-N-D-Y, Cagle, C-A-G-L-E. I live at 2 North

10 Edgewood Road, Mount Vernon, Ohio. And I'm Clinton

11 Township.

12 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or

13 work in the project area?

14 THE WITNESS: No.

15 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead

16 with your testimony.

17 DIRECT STATEMENT

18 THE WITNESS: I am here to oppose the

19 Frasier Solar panel project. But I am thankful for

20 this time in gathering in this setting that give our

21 community an opportunity to speak. What an amazing

22 country we live in.

23 I don't come today as a farmer, as a

24 farmer's wife, or even a rural homeowner. I do,

25 however, come to you as a daughter of a former Ohio

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1 Grain elevator owner.
 2 My father, God rest his soul, at the
 3 time owned the largest independently owned elevator in
 4 the state of Ohio, of which my brother and his loyal
 5 employees helped run the day-to-day operations.
 6 Because of this, I grew up with some
 7 understanding of the farming industry and respected
 8 the important process of preparing soil, planting
 9 seed, and ultimately the harvest season.
 10 Being the youngest, my father would
 11 often take us on afternoon Sunday drives, as he called
 12 it, driving through the countryside after church,
 13 seeking growing crops and -- checking on growing crops
 14 and the farms, trying to gauge how the season was
 15 going to play out.
 16 I remember many harvest nights that he
 17 wouldn't come up, being in the combines himself,
 18 trying to help the farmers get the crops off the
 19 fields throughout the night so they could get some
 20 sleep.
 21 After all their hard work, the farmers
 22 trucks would line up, have their corn, wheat, or beans
 23 weighed, measured, dried, and siloed. I have many
 24 found memories of sweeping corn and riding the rickety
 25 elevator to the top of the silos when he would measure

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1 how much storage room they had left before being full.
 2 Eventually trains would come in. Cars
 3 filled the grains -- cars filled with grain and then
 4 be distributed around the entire country.
 5 My father eventually sold the elevator,
 6 but my nephew still to this day works in the elevator
 7 business. I tell y'all of this to share a different
 8 perspective. I live in the city but raised my
 9 children to respect the farming community.
 10 There's a large farm outside our town.
 11 We respectfully say out loud, God bless the farmer,
 12 every single time we pass by. I can't imagine what my
 13 father would say about all this polar [sic] stuff. He
 14 wouldn't like it, as it would threaten his entire
 15 life's work.
 16 Many of us saw the disheartening drone
 17 video before it was taken down, telling the story by a
 18 neighbor of the poor Madison County farmer just north
 19 of us who took his life, leaving his wife and two sons
 20 with a thousand acres of farmland that he had leased,
 21 farmed, put his sweat, dreams, and hopes into for 30
 22 years, was sold out from under him and before his eyes
 23 turned into a solid thousand acres of metal and glass.
 24 Where his home and barn was surrounded
 25 by acres of rich soil, beautiful green fields, and

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1 evidence of the fruit of his labor, was now solid
 2 solar panels. The landowner's daughter from
 3 California inherited the land.
 4 Not caring about the land and detached
 5 from the situation for whatever reason, sold it to the
 6 solar power company with or without knowing that this
 7 transaction would completely devastate this family --
 8 to ruin.
 9 And why aren't people talking about the
 10 locust sounding inverters it takes to operate these
 11 fields? Our nearby counties have tourists that come
 12 in by the thousands each year to witness the lush
 13 rolling green hills and experience the Amish
 14 communities.
 15 What a different landscape they will
 16 witness if these solar panel frames are continued to
 17 be allowed to take over our countryside. The United
 18 States of America has some of the most beautiful
 19 farmland in the world, and like I said, I'm no farmer.
 20 But I am a product of a farm community.
 21 We all are, for that matter. Every time we buy a loaf
 22 of bread, fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, a can of
 23 beans, a bag of frozen peas at the grocery store,
 24 we're reminded of what our farm fields, farmers and
 25 their hard work in this beautiful country contributes

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1 to the world.
 2 I also know -- I don't know about you,
 3 but when I see the small signs in the produce section
 4 that states locally grown, I find myself feeling a
 5 sense of pride and gratitude for our local farmers.
 6 The bottom line is this. It doesn't
 7 take a farmer to learn about the damaging effects the
 8 panels can have on the soil, especially if broken or
 9 damaged, and recognize that the solar panel business
 10 invades one of our county's, state's, and country's
 11 greatest assets: farmable land.
 12 Solar panels do not belong in our
 13 fields, especially in Ohio where it still snows in
 14 April and can be gray five to six months out of the
 15 year.
 16 All of these seems to be a small piece
 17 of a much greater, bigger puzzle that leads to
 18 enormous liability for our country. Thank you for
 19 your time.
 20 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 21 Any questions from counsel?
 22 Thank you for your testimony.
 23 Up next is Laurie Sutton, and on deck
 24 is Kristi Ferrin.
 25 Ms. Sutton, are you an intervenor in

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1 the case?

2 MS. SUTTON: No.

3 JUDGE HICKS: Please raise your right

4 hand.

5 WHEREUPON,

6 LAURIE SUTTON,

7 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

8 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

9 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

10 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and

11 spell your name for the record.

12 THE WITNESS: L-A-U-R-I-E S-U-T-T-O-N.

13 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide

14 your address and any township.

15 THE WITNESS: 3685 Hilliard State Road,

16 Hilliard, Ohio.

17 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work

18 in the project area?

19 THE WITNESS: No.

20 JUDGE HICKS: Please go ahead.

21 DIRECT STATEMENT

22 THE WITNESS: I oppose the utility

23 solar development. We perish for lack of knowledge.

24 Is fertile farmland better used for food or renewable

25 energy? Why would we want to destroy our fertile

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1 farmland and eliminate the ability for us to produce

2 food for a 40-year duration?

3 What are the long-term impacts of

4 utility solar developments on wildlife, water,

5 forestry, and humans?

6 There are not enough studies at present

7 to show the impact to our local ecosystems. No doubt

8 there will be altered effects from sun exposure to

9 moisture to surface temperatures, with unexpected

10 impacts on local ecosystems.

11 For example, the impact on solar

12 wildlife interactions and avian collisions.

13 Knox County is blessed to have bald

14 eagles, which were endangered. And bald eagles' nests

15 have increased over several years due to protection

16 laws. What will happen to the bald eagle when utility

17 solar developers invade rural ecosystems?

18 Weather is another variable, even for

19 the best of rural farming, but even more so for

20 maintaining the 220,000 to 270,000 PV solar panels

21 that are projected to be used in this almost 1400-acre

22 endeavor.

23 Damage to these PV panels causes all

24 sorts of soil erosion, leaching, and flooding if not

25 replaced promptly and properly. Even dust adhering to

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1 these PV solar panels causes inefficiencies to the

2 electric output.

3 Ongoing maintenance is required to

4 maintain these acres of utility solar developments.

5 Throughout all sever forms of weather, lightning, hail

6 sleet, wind, dust, lack of light, extreme cold,

7 extreme heat, snow, et cetera.

8 The main goal of utility-solar

9 development is to provide electricity, not necessarily

10 growing crops. Grass seems to be the most

11 cost-effective ground cover in these excavated,

12 flattened fields of PV solar panels.

13 How does grass contribute to the

14 diverse rural ecosystems in place now in Knox County?

15 The proposed use of agrivoltaics

16 involves raising the heights of the PV solar panels,

17 increasing the cost of the utility solar panel

18 installation by digging deeper for wind loading, and

19 the need for additional steel for foundational ports.

20 Also, the spacing between the PV solar

21 panel rows must be increased, which decreases the

22 amount of electricity output.

23 And the wires need to be encased for

24 cattle and sheep grazing. The use of agrivoltaics

25 increases the overall cost of the installation and

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1 ongoing maintenance cost to provide the main goal of

2 increased electricity.

3 You cannot burn fields any longer,

4 which is the oldest tool of agricultural cultivation

5 to turn around a field and plant a new crop. How will

6 crop rotation and cultivation be maintained with the

7 agrivoltaics?

8 Solar e-waste is a problem which has

9 not yet been solved in the USA, with no viable

10 solution at present. Is this truly progress or

11 destruction? No one will know the environmental

12 impact to our local ecosystems for decades to come.

13 I have a vested interest in Knox County

14 as this is where my church campus is located, in the

15 beautiful rural countryside where woods shelter native

16 wildlife, where native plants flourish, and where it

17 is surrounded by the fertile farmland of Knox County.

18 I enjoy the fresh produce from the

19 extensive rural farm markets throughout Knox County

20 throughout the seasons. I do not want to see those

21 farm markets decline or go out of business due to

22 disruption of the diverse, established, local, and

23 rural ecosystems already in place.

24 On March 19, 2024, the people of Knox

25 County spoke and said no with their votes to utility

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1 solar development. Thank you for your time.
2 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
3 Any questions from counsel?
4 CROSS-EXAMINATION
5 BY MR. WIEGEL:
6 Q You said you live in Hilliard; correct?
7 A Yes.
8 Q Is that Franklin County?
9 A Franklin County?
10 Q Okay. Do you actively do any opposition to
11 solar in Franklin County?
12 A No, not at present.
13 Q So your only connection to Knox County is
14 your church campus?
15 A Yes.
16 Q Okay. Do you think it is -- even though you
17 have an opinion, do you believe that it's for the
18 people of Knox County to vocalize their support or
19 opposition over yours since you don't reside in Knox
20 County?
21 A No, I think I'm -- statewide, because it's
22 been nixed in some of the counties I resided in when I
23 was growing up: Auglaize, Logan, Allen, praise the
24 Lord. So those counties have nixed it so far.
25 Hopefully it stays that way. But yeah, I

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1 have a vested interest in Ohio because I've been a
2 native Ohioan my entire life. I live in this state.
3 Q Okay. Thank you.
4 A You're welcome.
5 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you for your
6 testimony.
7 I'm just going to generally ask that --
8 you slipped one by there on some friendly cross.
9 We're going to try to keep things moving here.
10 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry. What?
11 JUDGE HICKS: Ms. Ferrin [sic], we had
12 other counsel had a question for you. Ms. Ferrin
13 [sic]?
14 THE REPORTER: Sir, I don't think you
15 introduced yourself at the beginning, so when you ask
16 your question, can you state your name and your
17 affiliation, please?
18 JUDGE HICKS: Ms. Ferrin [sic], could
19 you -- he has a question for you. Could you come back
20 to the mic?
21 MR. EISENSEN: Hi. My name is Matthew
22 Eisen. I'm an attorney for Ethan Robertson.
23 CROSS-EXAMINATION
24 BY MR. EISENSEN:
25 Q Hi. My name is Matthew Eisen. I'm an

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1 attorney for Ethan Robertson.
2 You argued at the agrivoltaics would
3 increase the price of the solar farm; is that correct?
4 A Yes. The implementation of it at the
5 beginning. Yes. Yes.
6 Q And would you rather that the solar farm not
7 have an agrivoltaics component?
8 A I didn't say that. I just said it increased
9 the cost of doing the business at the beginning. And,
10 I mean, your main goal is to provide electricity, so
11 that's your main goal.
12 Q And have you read the staff report?
13 A Yes, I have.
14 Q And do you know about how many sheep this
15 land could support?
16 A I've seen other reports, not just yours.
17 But yeah, it can support quite a few sheep. It has to
18 to graze on the grass or the mowing would be
19 astronomical. The mowing is astronomical. You use
20 the sheep to decrease the cost of the mowing.
21 Q It would be about --
22 A I've seen some of the mowing at million -- a
23 million.
24 JUDGE HICKS: Let him finish his
25 question, and then you can answer.

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1 BY MR. EISENSEN:
2 Q So the project would support about 3,000
3 sheep; correct? And you are concerned about loss of
4 agricultural production?
5 A Of course. That's a given. That's a given.
6 You can't replace grass. Grass doesn't provide an
7 ecosystem that we have already in place.
8 Q But 3,000 sheep producing 4800 lambs per
9 year, isn't that a significant amount of agricultural
10 production?
11 A No, not under those conditions.
12 MR. EISENSEN: Thanks.
13 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
14 Up next is Kristi Ferrin. I'm sorry,
15 Ms. Sutton. I might have referred to you as Ms.
16 Ferrin a moment ago.
17 THE WITNESS: You did, a few times.
18 JUDGE HICKS: My apologies.
19 On deck is Lorie Van Valkenburg.
20 Ms. Ferrin, are you an intervenor in
21 the case?
22 MS. FERRIN: No, I'm not.
23 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
24 right hand.
25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 KRISTI FERRIN,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. You may need to
 7 lean into the mic just a little bit. Could you please
 8 state and spell your name for the record.
 9 THE WITNESS: It's Kristi Ferrin,
 10 K-R-I-S-T-I F-E-R-R-I-N.
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And could you
 12 please provide your address with any township?
 13 THE WITNESS: It is 9085 Graceland Lane
 14 Road, Saint Louisville. And that's Eden Township.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you. And I'm still
 16 having a little trouble hearing you, so -- my
 17 apologies.
 18 THE WITNESS: Sorry. Is this better?
 19 JUDGE HICKS: I think so. More
 20 importantly, if the court reporter can get you, we are
 21 A-okay.
 22 THE REPORTER: I'm fine.
 23 THE WITNESS: Okay. Deal.
 24 JUDGE HICKS: Okay.
 25 And do you live or work in the project

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1 area?
 2 THE WITNESS: No.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 4 with your testimony.
 5 DIRECT STATEMENT
 6 THE WITNESS: Okay. Great.
 7 I'm a Licking County resident who lives
 8 seven minutes from the Knox County line. I am
 9 completely opposed to the Frasier Solar project.
 10 Bringing industrial solar facilities into Ohio under
 11 the guise of farming is an egregious act of violence
 12 on our intelligence and our environment.
 13 The solar panel farms destroying prime
 14 farmland not only desecrates valuable ecosystems, it
 15 also diminishes our ability to produce crops. The
 16 farmland takeover is a direct attack on our way of
 17 life, our pursuit of happiness, and our freedoms.
 18 You're taking away our independence
 19 that our forefathers fought so hard to preserve. Our
 20 farmland is a secure food source that gives us the
 21 freedom to grow our own food and distribute it.
 22 Taking the land is taking away a
 23 valuable resource that would have detrimental impact
 24 on our agriculture.
 25 Big corporations coming into our small

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1 towns is resulting in the deaths of our communities.
 2 By pitting neighbor against neighbor, taking advantage
 3 of people in financial duress, and violating the
 4 people's trust.
 5 This takeover is an act of war against
 6 the people and our land. I'm here to tell you that we
 7 the people are the people. And we are ready to fight
 8 against this facade of this green initiative.
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Please, folks.
 10 THE WITNESS: It is not a green deal
 11 when you're seeking to kill and destroy our green
 12 land. The same carbon footprints that you're alleging
 13 to be reduced are actually being increased by the use
 14 of big machinery that runs on gas and oil and the
 15 emissions machinery puts into the air during the
 16 construction of these solar fields.
 17 There is not even sustainable data to
 18 support these solar fields even being able to produce
 19 at a viable rate. Ohio is not a sunshine state. We
 20 quite frequently have hailstorms that will easily
 21 damage the solar panels.
 22 Texas has taught us that hail damages
 23 the panels, making them into biohazards that leak into
 24 the earth, poisoning the ground and the water. The
 25 wells that people use for their homes and farms are

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1 poisoned from the leaking waste coming in from the
 2 solar panels.
 3 I stand here today against the
 4 industrial solar farms coming to Knox County in
 5 solidarity with my neighboring community. Once this
 6 farmland has been taken by the industrial solar
 7 fields, the land becomes desolate.
 8 Meaning, once these 40-year contracts
 9 are up, there are hundreds and thousands of acres that
 10 is no longer useful or viable. It is our
 11 responsibility to protect our communities and our
 12 younger generations from tyranny by indefinitely
 13 limiting productional use of land.
 14 The Frasier Solar project does not
 15 serve public interest in any capacity. In fact, when
 16 people found out about the backyard deals, NDA
 17 contracts, and that the sitting commissioner did not
 18 represent the people in good faith, they were voted
 19 out of office.
 20 To help satisfy the claim of public
 21 interest, it shows a significant lack when 17 out of
 22 22 townships have adopted resolutions to deny solar
 23 projects being implemented within Knox County.
 24 It is the due diligence of this board
 25 to deny the solar Frasier project. There is too much

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1 opposition from the community. The project lacks
 2 support, integrity, and imposes a substantial threat
 3 to the community's quality of life.
 4 For this project to have been allowed
 5 to come this far is a travesty. The people of Knox
 6 County were deceived while this project tried to move
 7 forward behind closed doors by corrupt elected
 8 officials.
 9 Fortunately for the community, this
 10 corruption was exposed and still has the ability to be
 11 stopped. I am honored to have the ability to speak
 12 and convey the heart of most of the community and
 13 surrounding communities.
 14 When Intel came to Johnstown, the
 15 community was sold out by the entrusted elected
 16 officials. And before people knew what was going on,
 17 the project was already being pushed through.
 18 By the grace of God, this solar project
 19 in Knox County was brought from the darkness, giving
 20 us the ability to fight. Ohio has had enough of being
 21 pushed around by big corporations that want to come in
 22 and destroy our land, communities, independence, and
 23 way of life.
 24 I would like to thank all the members
 25 for your time and consideration in this matter. I

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1 encourage you to take this opportunity to do the right
 2 thing, save this community, stand up for what's right,
 3 shut down this industrial solar project here as you
 4 did with the 1500 acres near Governor Mike DeWine's
 5 home.
 6 As a general reminder, you have a legal
 7 obligation to deny the certification because it does
 8 not serve public interest, convenience, and necessity.
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 10 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
 12 counsel?
 13 Thank you for your testimony.
 14 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Up next is Lori Van
 16 Valkenburg, and on deck is Kari Thomas. Mr. Van Kley
 17 may be able to -- Kari Thomas, I believe, may be an
 18 intervenor, so I may be able to save you a trip up.
 19 Okay.
 20 We will circle back to you as we had
 21 indicated to Ms. Bartley. So on deck will be Scott
 22 Noble.
 23 Are you an intervenor in the case?
 24 MS. VAN VALKENBURG: I am not.
 25 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your

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1 right hand.
 2 WHEREUPON,
 3 LORI VAN VALKENBURG,
 4 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 5 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 6 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 7 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please state
 8 and spell your name for the record.
 9 THE WITNESS: Yes. Lori, L-O-R-I, Van
 10 Valkenburg, V-A-N V-A-L-K-E-N-B-U-R-G.
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please provide
 12 your address including any township.
 13 THE WITNESS: Yes. I live at 663
 14 Courtland Drive, Howard, Ohio 43028. And I'm in
 15 Howard Township in Knox County.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 17 in the project area?
 18 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 19 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 20 DIRECT STATEMENT
 21 THE WITNESS: As far as the solar issue
 22 on our farmland, the people of Knox County have
 23 spoken. They have spoken loud and clear that they do
 24 not want industrial solar on our farms. Their voting
 25 in the most recent primary election held just a little

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1 over two weeks ago indicates this.
 2 The people of Knox County voted in two
 3 county commissioners who are opposed to industrial
 4 solar on our farmland. Of all the candidates who ran
 5 for the two seats of county commissioner, the two most
 6 vocal in opposition to the Frasier Solar project won
 7 their seats.
 8 One of these candidates was running
 9 against the incumbent. The incumbent had been in
 10 office for many years and made the motion and signed
 11 the resolution to allow large industrial solar
 12 projects in Knox County.
 13 So his defeat at the polls was a clear
 14 message that the people of Knox County were not in
 15 agreement with his actions.
 16 Another major indicator that speaks
 17 volumes against Frasier's solar project and future
 18 projects is the recent number of Knox County townships
 19 that have signed resolutions banning large industrial
 20 solar on our farmlands. 17 of the 22 townships so far
 21 have done this. 17 of 22 so far.
 22 It seems quite clear that this issue
 23 should be over based on the overwhelming opposition to
 24 it here in Knox County. I'm not a so-called expert on
 25 solar, but I do have common sense to see what is

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1 actually important to the people who actually live in
2 Knox County.
3 Don't we have the right to say what's
4 important to us in how our farmland is to be used?
5 The use of precious farmland for these projects
6 literally doesn't make sense from an environmental
7 aspect. Why would we want to use prime agricultural
8 land for anything other than food sources?
9 Why place of thousands of solar panels
10 there specifically? Not to mention, why Ohio? Ohio,
11 one of the seven least sunniest states. One of the
12 seven lowest states with peak sun hours as stated by
13 www.solarreviews.com [sic].
14 So if a business owner dealing in solar
15 and solar panels is actually caring about how much
16 energy they could provide through these solar panels,
17 wouldn't one of the biggest factors in determining
18 where they should set up these projects include the
19 most important aspect, that being sunlight, the most
20 sunlight you could get?
21 One would certainly not choose Ohio.
22 So there must be other reasons. Is it government
23 subsidies they receive no matter how inefficient or
24 illogical their placements are? Or what is/are the
25 real reasons they are pushing for these solar projects

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1 here?
2 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
3 Any questions?
4 Mr. Settineri?
5 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you.
6 CROSS-EXAMINATION
7 BY MR. SETTINERI:
8 Q Good evening.
9 A Hi.
10 Q Just to clarify, you mentioned the election
11 in your testimony.
12 A Yes.
13 Q That was the Republican primary; correct?
14 A Yes.
15 Q And it wasn't a general election?
16 A It was a primary.
17 Q Thank you.
18 A Mm-hmm.
19 JUDGE HICKS: One second. Counsel also
20 has a question.
21 CROSS-EXAMINATION
22 BY MR. ELKIN
23 Q Just a couple more questions. Thanks. Is
24 it your belief that if the application for this
25 project is denied, all of the land in question would

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1 continue to be used solely as agricultural land for
2 the next 40 years?
3 A I do not have the answer to that.
4 Q Just one follow-up question to that. What
5 do you would be more likely to incorporate
6 agricultural activities into the production, the solar
7 project or a residential development?
8 A That's not the issue right now.
9 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you for your
10 testimony.
11 Up next is Scott Noble. And then I
12 will just note after Mr. Noble's testimony, we are
13 going to take a break. We've been going for about two
14 and a half hours. Rhonda Noble is who is listed as on
15 deck.
16 I believe, Mr. Van Kley, she is an
17 intervenor as well?
18 So I will save you the trip up. When
19 we come back, you will go back on the list as well
20 when we circle back to everyone with intervenors
21 testifying.
22 Mr. Noble, are you an intervenor in the
23 case?
24 MR. NOBLE: No.
25 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your

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1 right hand.
2 WHEREUPON,
3 SCOTT NOBLE,
4 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
5 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
6 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
7 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. You may need to
8 put the mic up just a little bit. Could you please
9 state and spell your name for the record.
10 THE WITNESS: Scott, S-C-O-T-T, Noble,
11 N-O-B-L-E.
12 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please your
13 address including any township.
14 THE WITNESS: 4465 Possum Street, Mount
15 Vernon, Ohio, Miller Township.
16 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
17 work in the project area?
18 THE WITNESS: I do.
19 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
20 with your testimony.
21 DIRECT STATEMENT
22 THE WITNESS: I am opposed to this
23 project. I have about 300 signatures for a petition
24 against this project.
25 I personally feel that covering

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1 hundreds of thousands of acres with solar panels all
 2 over our country is a very bad idea that we will all
 3 eventually feel in the grocery stores and in your
 4 checkbooks because it's going to cost us a lot of
 5 money in food. That's all I got to say.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you, sir.
 7 Any question from counsel?
 8 Thank you for your testimony, Mr.
 9 Noble.
 10 So as I said, we're going to take a
 11 break. It looks like it's about 7:30. So if folks
 12 could try to be back in their seats, we'll pick up at
 13 7:45.
 14 And just to let you know, up will be
 15 Norma Barker or Parker -- I'm sorry I can't tell --
 16 and on deck will be Ron Butcher. So we will see you
 17 back there then, and we will go off the record.
 18 THE REPORTER: We are going off the
 19 record at 7:28 p.m.
 20 (Off the record.)
 21 THE REPORTER: We are back on the
 22 record at 7:49 p.m. Go ahead.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Go ahead, Mr. Settineri.
 24 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor, just what I
 25 view as a matter of housekeeping. I know the last

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1 witness had a petition signed by a number of people.
 2 I would ask tonight that any statements from others of
 3 that nature go on the public comment docket because
 4 those people are not here tonight.
 5 JUDGE HICKS: Any other counsel?
 6 MR. TAVENOR: I would support that.
 7 MR. VAN KLEY: I would object to that.
 8 If they're handing in petitions or
 9 anything else that -- whatever exhibits they have
 10 should be provided with the same sort of status as any
 11 other exhibits that are accompanying the testimony
 12 tonight.
 13 I don't see any reason to treat them
 14 any differently just because they happen to be
 15 petitions. If anything, petitions are probably more
 16 valuable and the board should pay more attention to
 17 those than other exhibits attached to testimony
 18 tonight.
 19 JUDGE HICKS: There's -- Mr. Settineri?
 20 THE REPORTER: I'm so sorry. Could you
 21 take the mic?
 22 JUDGE HICKS: There we go. So we're
 23 going to allow it to be attached to the transcript.
 24 The board has the expertise to give the petition the
 25 weight it deserves.

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1 And we're just going to carry on.
 2 And with that, I'm going to hand it off
 3 to my colleague to continue.
 4 JUDGE ASTA: Ms. Parker, are you an
 5 intervenor?
 6 MS. PARKER: No, I'm not.
 7 JUDGE ASTA: Could you raise your right
 8 hand.
 9 WHEREUPON,
 10 NORMA PARKER,
 11 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 12 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 13 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 14 JUDGE ASTA: Could you please state
 15 your name and spell it for the record.
 16 THE WITNESS: I'm Norma Parker. It's
 17 N-O-R-M-A P-A-R-K-E-R.
 18 JUDGE ASTA: And your address including
 19 the township?
 20 THE WITNESS: 6687 Blackjack Road,
 21 Mount Vernon, Ohio, Miller Township.
 22 JUDGE ASTA: And do you reside or work
 23 within the project area?
 24 THE WITNESS: I do. I reside.
 25 JUDGE ASTA: All right. You may go.

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1 DIRECT STATEMENT
 2 THE WITNESS: I know that a lot of
 3 other testifiers tonight will talk about the amount of
 4 sun that we lack in Ohio.
 5 The statistics of electric that the
 6 solar actually produces, that there's not a
 7 responsible use -- this is not a responsible use for
 8 our prime farmland, and about the decrease in the
 9 value of our properties.
 10 Even though I agree a hundred percent,
 11 I'm going to speak on a more personal level. I'm
 12 going to try.
 13 If Frasier Solar is approved, we will
 14 be able to look out any one of our windows and see a
 15 field of solar panels. We'll no longer be able to see
 16 the sun actually rise or set as the 15-foot panels
 17 will be in the sightline of our horizon.
 18 There will be four inverters within a
 19 mile of our home. Two will be within -- three will be
 20 within a half a mile, and one of them will be
 21 approximately 500 feet away from our backyard.
 22 Inverters can be heard for a mile.
 23 This is a constant high pitch tone, 24 hours a day,
 24 365 days a year, for 40 years. It'll be a sound we
 25 will hear forever. Can you imagine opening your

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1 windows in the summer?
 2 We love it outside in the warm weather.
 3 And we listen to the tree frogs, the crickets, the
 4 birds. We watch the animals in the distance. It's a
 5 total Zen just sitting outdoors as I am sure it is
 6 with our other homeowners that purchase land in the
 7 country for the same reason. We like peaceful.
 8 We have a lot of wildlife in this area.
 9 A fenced in solar field will re-route them towards the
 10 heavily trafficked roads nearby. There's a small
 11 stream that runs through the project area. We see a
 12 lot of different bird species that feed in that
 13 stream, including the American bald eagles.
 14 Please reject Frasier Solar, as 17 of
 15 Knox County's 22 townships have passed industrial
 16 solar exclusionary zones. The facility does not serve
 17 public interest, convenience, or necessity, as the
 18 state law requires. Thank you.
 19 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 20 Any questions?
 21 Thank you for your testimony.
 22 Next up is Ron Butcher, and Teresa
 23 Peters on deck.
 24 Mr. Butcher, are you a intervenor in
 25 this case?

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1 MR. BUTCHER: No, I'm not.
 2 JUDGE ASTA: Could you raise your right
 3 hand.
 4 WHEREUPON,
 5 RON BUTCHER,
 6 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 7 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 8 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 9 JUDGE ASTA: And if you could please
 10 state and spell your name for the record.
 11 THE WITNESS: Ron Butcher, R-O-N
 12 B-U-T-C-H-E-R. My address of my family farm is 12360
 13 Butcher Road, Mount Vernon, in Miller Township, Knox
 14 County, Ohio.
 15 JUDGE ASTA: And do you reside or work
 16 within the project --
 17 THE WITNESS: Yes.
 18 JUDGE ASTA: All right. You may
 19 proceed.
 20 DIRECT STATEMENT
 21 THE WITNESS: Okay. Thank you.
 22 Like I said, my name is Ron Butcher.
 23 Butcher Road, Mount Vernon, Ohio, the address is our
 24 140-acre family farm, one field south of the proposed
 25 Frasier project.

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1 I oppose this project to be built on
 2 prime farmland. Founded in 1870, we're a 150-year
 3 historical designated farm by the state of Ohio. My
 4 grandfather and my father both died right here on the
 5 soil of our farm. Non-farm people don't understand
 6 what it's like to own farm ground.
 7 My wife, my son, his wife and my
 8 grandchildren operate our beautiful farm. They're the
 9 seventh generations of Butchers to live and operate
 10 the family farm.
 11 We are sickened. We're angry that this
 12 ugly industrial site could be the new forever view for
 13 us and hundreds of our local families here in Knox
 14 County.
 15 We raise both pork and beef on our
 16 farm, and we're one of Knox County's largest maple
 17 syrup producers, tapping nearly 5,000 trees, including
 18 one tract of woods which is on the property that
 19 borders the Frasier project.
 20 We don't know what 40 years of these
 21 panels are going to do. Increased ambient air
 22 temperatures from solar panels could affect the maple
 23 sap production in these woods and have an impact on a
 24 continued agriculture viability of our land.
 25 Our sustainability relies on our

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1 agritourism business to sell our family products.
 2 Hundreds of tourists from all over central Ohio travel
 3 to Knox County to attend our annual open house
 4 weekends and throughout the year to purchase our
 5 products and enjoy what we have to offer: the small
 6 family experience and the education about where food
 7 comes from. Food doesn't come from Walmart. It comes
 8 from us.
 9 Families who tour our farm rave about
 10 how beautiful it is here in Knox County. Families --
 11 and when we talk about what our new forever view is
 12 going to be from the front of our store looking out
 13 across there, people were just angry that that's even
 14 a thing in Knox County.
 15 Our farm is in a valley downstream of
 16 the southern end of the project. Any additional
 17 runoff water, which we assume there will be, will run
 18 downhill and affect us dramatically. We can't
 19 tolerate any additional runoff water, which we know
 20 this project will cause.
 21 As we've seen over the last few days,
 22 our rainfall events are becoming larger and causing
 23 erosion. This project severely impacts the continued
 24 agriculture viability of our downstream farm and other
 25 farm ground in Miller Township.

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1 Our environment is going to be
 2 impacted. We watch the deer and wildlife run across
 3 the fields of this proposed site daily. This is not
 4 good stewardship of our land.
 5 US Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on
 6 March 26th said that he was encouraging the use --
 7 stated that we're encouraging the use of non-prime
 8 farmland for purposes of renewable energy, and said he
 9 was concerned that renewable energy will overtake
 10 prime farm ground.
 11 Ten million acres of solar collectors
 12 are proposed. That's a lot of sheep. This project
 13 does not satisfy any public interest, convenience, or
 14 necessity in our community.
 15 It benefits a handful of landowners.
 16 It's not saving any family legacy farms. It actually
 17 has the potential to sell some prime farm ground to
 18 out of state investors.
 19 Our community is united against this.
 20 We're hearing from pro-solar people have been
 21 recruited to be here. They're not even from the
 22 community. Union workers are lobbying for their
 23 benefit with no concern about ruining the quality of
 24 life in our community.
 25 Many pro-solar proponents in Knox

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1 County are property owners and relatives of people
 2 receiving money from the project. We don't know how
 3 sustainable the sheep grazing thing is.
 4 We just know that it's probably not
 5 going to generate nearly as much revenue as currently
 6 generated now for agriculture. I'm scared to death
 7 about construction and danger of my grandkids riding
 8 their bikes between different barns.
 9 In closing, just like Greene County,
 10 where you denied the Kingswood solar project where
 11 Governor DeWine's farm is located, we do not want this
 12 industrial project here either. We are praying that
 13 you give us the same consideration that you gave the
 14 residents of Greene County and deny this project.
 15 JUDGE ASTA: Any questions?
 16 Thank you, Mr. Butcher.
 17 Teresa Peters, and next up is Dan
 18 Peters.
 19 Ms. Peters, are you an intervenor in
 20 this case?
 21 MS. PETERS: No, I am not.
 22 JUDGE ASTA: Can you raise your right
 23 hand.
 24 //
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 TERESA PETERS,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE ASTA: Could you state your name
 7 and spell it for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: Teresa Peters,
 9 T-E-R-E-S-A Peters, P-E-T-E-R-S.
 10 JUDGE ASTA: And your address?
 11 THE WITNESS: 6796 Possum Street. And
 12 that's in Miller Township, approximately a mile away
 13 from the project.
 14 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you. You may
 15 proceed.
 16 DIRECT STATEMENT
 17 THE WITNESS: Okay. I'm opposed to
 18 Frasier Solar project, very much. I've researched the
 19 effects of solar on farm ground and have many
 20 concerns, several of which are property values
 21 depreciating, loss of food for animals and human
 22 consumption, impact on wildlife, the thousands of
 23 deer, eagles, et cetera.
 24 We have deer everywhere in our
 25 community. When we drive anywhere at night, they're

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1 all over the road. So we don't want this for them.
 2 Pollution into soil and wells from runoff, disposal of
 3 old solar panels -- how do they get rid of those?
 4 Knox County is a farming community with
 5 beautiful country views given to us by God, and should
 6 not be destroyed by thousands of ugly China-made solar
 7 panels that do not produce enough power to the number
 8 of acres taken out of farming production for the same
 9 reasons that you would not put solar panels in a
 10 wildlife preserve are the same reasons that they
 11 should not be put on our farm ground in our county or
 12 our township.
 13 People live here. This is my family,
 14 my friends, and the 90 percent, I'm pretty sure, that
 15 do not want solar panels in our community.
 16 Most of the pro-solar people who have
 17 testified will not be affected by the solar panels, as
 18 the people who live here in the middle of fields of
 19 solar panels.
 20 Those of us that will have to live near
 21 the panels and look at them every day, drive through
 22 them daily, listen to their noise, miss our beautiful
 23 fields, livestock, and wildlife, do not want solar
 24 panels in our community. Thank you.
 25 JUDGE ASTA: Any questions?

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1 Thank you.

2 Dan Peters, and up next is Darrell

3 Bebout. If I said that wrong, I apologize.

4 Mr. Peters, are you an intervenor in

5 this case?

6 MR. PETERS: No.

7 JUDGE ASTA: Can you raise your right

8 hand?

9 WHEREUPON,

10 DAN PETERS,

11 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

12 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

13 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

14 JUDGE ASTA: Could you state your name

15 and spell it for the record.

16 THE WITNESS: Dan Peters, D-A-N

17 P-E-T-E-R-S.

18 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and

19 township as well.

20 THE WITNESS: 6796 Possum Street, Mount

21 Vernon, Miller Township, about a mile from the major

22 part of this project.

23 JUDGE ASTA: You can go ahead.

24 DIRECT STATEMENT

25 THE WITNESS: Okay. Yes. We are

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1 opposed to this project, not to solar. You want it on

2 your house, that's fine. I wouldn't pick it because

3 Centerburg School already caught fire from a solar

4 panel and a lot of people don't even know that

5 happened last summer.

6 So we don't want to lose farm ground,

7 crop ground, or rural landscape. Just know we've been

8 seeing bald eagles less than an eighth of a mile from

9 our house. The local opposition is 17 out of 22

10 townships in Knox County including the city of Mount

11 Vernon and on your paper it says opposition from the

12 people that live here.

13 And I would say that's definitely a lot

14 of opposition. The opposition is about 78 to 80

15 percent in the county and probably more than that in

16 our township. A lot of the lessees don't even live in

17 the area, so I wouldn't call them farmers. I'd call

18 them landowners.

19 They tried to put one a half a mile

20 from the Governor that was just mentioned, and they

21 turned it down. They don't want it either.

22 Little money to the local fire and EMS

23 department. I haven't heard that at all. I believe

24 the number was 300,000 one-time shot to our local fire

25 department. Over 40 years, one-time payment. That's

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1 absurd.

2 I don't see the big enhancement to our

3 community for this project. It will lower property

4 values. If these folks don't want it that are here

5 tonight, why would anybody want to pay market price

6 for the house that you have now if it devalues the

7 property value?

8 The loss of income and jobs for locals

9 including equipment companies, local farming equipment

10 companies will have to leave. We have about four of

11 them in our town. What are they going to do?

12 Out of town work -- taking all of their

13 dollars to the area where they live and pay for their

14 houses. If you don't live here, why are you here

15 speaking about our community? I'm done.

16 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

17 Any questions?

18 Thank you.

19 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

20 JUDGE ASTA: Darrell Bebout, and up

21 next is Rebecca Chamberlin.

22 Mr. Bebout, am I saying your name

23 correctly?

24 MR. BEBOUT: Bebout. Yes.

25 JUDGE ASTA: Awesome. Are you an

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1 intervenor in this case?

2 MR. BEBOUT: No.

3 JUDGE ASTA: Could you raise your right

4 hand.

5 WHEREUPON,

6 DARRELL BEBOUT,

7 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

8 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

9 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

10 JUDGE ASTA: Could you state your name

11 and spell it for the record.

12 THE WITNESS: Darrell Bebout,

13 D-A-R-R-E-L-L B-E-B-O-U-T. I live at 15893 Vance

14 Road, Mount Vernon, Ohio. I am in Miller Township.

15 JUDGE ASTA: And do you reside or work

16 near the project area?

17 THE WITNESS: Yes, I do.

18 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.

19 DIRECT STATEMENT

20 THE WITNESS: I am opposed to the

21 Frasier Solar project slated for Knox County. This is

22 a waste of prime farm ground that we do not have to

23 waste. In 2023, 1.8 million acres of US farm ground

24 was taken out of production for industrial and

25 residential use.

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1 In 2023, the United States imported
 2 more food than it exported. If we continue to waste
 3 our farm ground on efficient projects such as this, we
 4 will soon be importing all of our food. And subject
 5 to pay whatever price is demanded.
 6 It will be no different than it is now
 7 for oil and oil producing countries that set the price
 8 and tell us how much we can have.
 9 The risk of leaking from these solar
 10 panels going in to pollute our underground water
 11 supply -- there is a very high water table in Miller
 12 Township.
 13 Water in my well is only 17 feet under
 14 the ground. My neighbor has a well that flows 2-inch
 15 pipe without being pumped. The risk of contamination
 16 to this underground water supply is not worth it.
 17 We have some of the best underground
 18 water in the state of Ohio and this should be
 19 protected at all cost.
 20 The solar project also infringes on the
 21 nesting ground of a group of sandhill cranes, which
 22 are on an endangered species list for the state of
 23 Ohio.
 24 These solar fields will displace a
 25 large number of wildlife, forcing them onto the

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1 neighboring farms, causing increase in crop damage and
 2 reducing profitability. This will also cause wildlife
 3 to cross the roads more frequently, resulting in more
 4 automobile accidents, thus causing higher auto
 5 insurance rates.
 6 There are a multitude of low-head dams
 7 in the state of Ohio. Why don't we look into putting
 8 in hydroelectric plants there? I know if wouldn't
 9 produce as much as the Hoover Dam, but they would not
 10 take up as much ground as the inefficient solar
 11 fields, and they will not have as big of an impact --
 12 effect on our environment. Thank you.
 13 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 14 Any questions?
 15 Thank you.
 16 Rebecca Chamberlin, and up next is Brad
 17 Carothers.
 18 Are you an intervenor in this case, Ms.
 19 Chamberlin?
 20 MS. CHAMBERLIN: No.
 21 WHEREUPON,
 22 REBECCA CHAMBERLIN,
 23 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 24 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 25 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

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1 JUDGE ASTA: And please state your name
 2 and spell it for the record.
 3 THE WITNESS: Rebecca, R-E-B-E-C-C-A,
 4 Chamberlin, C-H-A-M-B-E-R-L-I-N.
 5 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and
 6 township.
 7 THE WITNESS: 10445 Blue Road, just
 8 like the color blue, Mount Vernon, in Liberty
 9 Township.
 10 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work
 11 near the project area?
 12 THE WITNESS: No.
 13 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.
 14 DIRECT STATEMENT
 15 THE WITNESS: Good evening. My husband
 16 and I live near Mount Vernon in Liberty Township, in
 17 the same house for 24 years. I have lived in Knox
 18 County my entire life, except when I attended college.
 19 I've seen Knox County change a lot over my lifetime,
 20 and I suspect it will change even more.
 21 I love how Knox County has such a
 22 variety of land usage. We have agricultural,
 23 residential areas, factories, public spaces like
 24 parks, and many kinds of stores and businesses. How
 25 we have evolved is that landowners have made decisions

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1 about what they think is best to do with their land.
 2 Now we have some landowners who are
 3 partnering with a company to implement a solar project
 4 in our county. The question is, should a landowner
 5 have the right to do what they want with the land, or
 6 does the community have the right to prevent the
 7 landowner from making their own choices?
 8 Here's how I see it. If the landowner
 9 should be able to make choices -- the landowner should
 10 be able to make choices about their land as long as
 11 what they're doing isn't hurting their neighbors.
 12 I've read a lot about the solar Frasier
 13 [sic] project, and in the end, I support the project.
 14 I think they're going to be good neighbors, and here's
 15 why.
 16 First, the project supports agriculture
 17 by allowing some young farmers to have grazing land
 18 for their sheep. And the land can be used for farming
 19 even after the solar project lease ends. This keeps
 20 agriculture alive in our county for years to come.
 21 Second, the project supports the
 22 environment by creating clean energy.
 23 And third, it will be quiet and clean.
 24 I think that's what a lot of people worry about. Will
 25 it be loud? Will it be trashy? And here's what I've

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1 learned. Solar panels aren't loud.
 2 Also, there will be landscaping
 3 including trees and other plants to serve as barriers
 4 between the project and the neighbors. And the solar
 5 panels will be cleaned up at the end of the project.
 6 These landowners and the Frasier Solar
 7 project have a plan that will allow them to keep this
 8 land for agriculture use, create clean energy, all
 9 while being clean and quiet. So that tells me we
 10 should allow the landowners to decide how to use their
 11 land and allow the Frasier Solar project to move
 12 forward.
 13 I know my land is not bordering the
 14 project. But I do have my land of my own, and I
 15 border other agricultural land. I realize we are all
 16 going to have to make decisions about our land over
 17 time.
 18 I can only hope that my neighbors and I
 19 put in the time and consideration that the Frasier
 20 Solar project has. They are doing things that are
 21 right for the community and seem committed to being
 22 good neighbors.
 23 Sheep and solar panels seem like good
 24 neighbors to me. To me, it's a whole lot better than
 25 a lot of other things I can imagine moving in.

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1 JUDGE ASTA: Any questions?
 2 Thank you, Ms. Chamberlin.
 3 Brad Carothers, and after Mr.
 4 Carothers, Katie Carothers.
 5 Are you an intervenor?
 6 MR. CAROTHERS: No.
 7 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 8 hand.
 9 WHEREUPON,
 10 BRAD CAROTHERS,
 11 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 12 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 13 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 14 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name and
 15 spell it for the record please.
 16 THE WITNESS: Brad Carothers, B-R-A-D
 17 C-A-R-O-T-H-E-R-S.
 18 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and
 19 township.
 20 THE WITNESS: 7510 Granville Road,
 21 Mount Vernon, Ohio. And that's in Clinton Township.
 22 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work
 23 near the project area?
 24 THE WITNESS: I live in the project
 25 area.

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1 DIRECT STATEMENT
 2 THE WITNESS: Hello. My name is Brad
 3 Carothers. I'm the director of operations for New
 4 Slate Land Management and serve on the board of
 5 trustees of the Ohio Sheep Improvement Association.
 6 Agriculture has deep roots in Knox
 7 County. And on agricultural sector in particular is
 8 the sheep industry.
 9 Knox County has continued to be one of
 10 the largest producing sheep counties in Ohio, and Ohio
 11 currently ranks fourth nationally with 4,133 total
 12 sheep averages, but falls to 11th with 143,000 in
 13 total sheep and land population. That leaves an
 14 average flock size of 34.
 15 One of the biggest factors to keep the
 16 average flock size limited has been lack access.
 17 However, Ohio is being offered with an opportunity.
 18 The amount of acreage of solar
 19 development being proposed and currently under
 20 construction provide to the future of the Ohio sheep
 21 industry with opportunities for growth never seen in
 22 the state before.
 23 We are fortunate Frasier Solar, a
 24 proposed utility-scale solar project, aiming to come
 25 to Knox County. Not only will create construction

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1 jobs and generate millions of dollars in revenue for
 2 local schools and local services, it will support
 3 agriculture and create jobs for local farmers.
 4 Frasier Solar is committed to dual
 5 solar/agricultural land use. New Slate Land
 6 Management has been working closely with Frasier Solar
 7 to develop a plan to allow for a sheep grazing
 8 operation within the project area.
 9 Last month we signed an agreement to
 10 provide sheep and to manage the vegetation at the
 11 840-acre site. About 2500 head of sheep will
 12 eventually be needed, which will make this one of the
 13 largest sheep grazing operations in Ohio.
 14 Frasier Solar has agreed to plan a
 15 robust ground vegetation for erosion control and
 16 stormwater management benefits, and to preserve for
 17 cultivation that will also serve as pasture and a food
 18 source for our sheep.
 19 We are excited about what solar grazing
 20 can mean for Ohio and Knox County's agricultural
 21 output. Currently the US imports about 70 percent of
 22 lamb consumed here as domestic production has
 23 declined. This means money and jobs that could stay
 24 in our local communities are lost to foreign
 25 competition.

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1 Dual land use solar project like
 2 Frasier will significantly to the growth of the sheep
 3 in Ohio and across the US. A solar grazing industry
 4 has already seen tremendous growths over the last
 5 three years.
 6 Today, according to a census done by
 7 the American Solar Grazing Association, there are over
 8 100,000 acres being grazed by 80,000 sheep across 500
 9 sites in 27 states.
 10 Solar grazing is a proven method of
 11 safe and effective vegetation management on
 12 utility-scale solar arrays that will also provide an
 13 impeccable opportunity for the growth of the sheep
 14 industry.
 15 The bottom line is sheep grazing at
 16 Frasier Solar will foster a symbiotic relationship
 17 that supports local farming, jobs, and land
 18 preservation as well as clean, local, and low-cost
 19 energy production.
 20 JUDGE ASTA: Any questions?
 21 Mr. Van Kley?
 22 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 23 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 24 Q So will you personally benefit if this
 25 project goes forward?

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1 A New Slate Land Management will have a
 2 contract to maintain to vegetation.
 3 Q Is that a company that you own?
 4 A That is a company I am partner in.
 5 Q Okay. Thank you.
 6 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 7 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 8 Q If there's not enough sheep under your
 9 contract, you said you're maintaining the vegetation,
 10 are you also in charge of mowing?
 11 A So our job is to maintain the vegetation in
 12 accordance with the vegetation management plan. So it
 13 would utilize both sheep and mowing as needed to
 14 ensure that the vegetation was properly maintained.
 15 Q But you would then still get paid even if
 16 there are no sheep?
 17 A Our job is to maintain the vegetation and
 18 our plan is to use sheep to do that.
 19 MR. WIEGEL: Okay. Thank you.
 20 JUDGE ASTA: Any other questions?
 21 Thank you.
 22 Katie Carothers, and up next is Tasha
 23 McKinney.
 24 Ms. Carothers, are an intervenor in
 25 this case?

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1 MS. CAROTHERS: Please raise your right
 2 hand.
 3 WHEREUPON,
 4 KATIE CAROTHERS,
 5 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 6 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 7 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 8 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name and
 9 spell it for the record.
 10 THE WITNESS: Katie, K-A-T-I-E,
 11 Carothers, C-A-R-O-T-H-E-R-S.
 12 JUDGE ASTA: And your address including
 13 the township.
 14 THE WITNESS: 7510 Granville Road,
 15 Mount Vernon, Ohio. Township is Clinton.
 16 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
 17 the project area?
 18 THE WITNESS: Yes, I live and work in
 19 the project area.
 20 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.
 21 DIRECT STATEMENT
 22 THE WITNESS: I support the Frasier
 23 Solar project. As you heard from my partner Brad, our
 24 company New Slate Land Management intends to be the
 25 vegetation management contractor for the 840-acre site

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1 where we will be employing around 2500 sheep in a
 2 rotational grazing system to keep the grass from
 3 shading the panels and improving the soils over the
 4 lifespan of the project.
 5 Frasier Solar, like all of the solar
 6 projects that utilize agrivoltaics, is one of the
 7 greatest opportunities for farmers who wish to grow
 8 their business but struggle with land access in this
 9 competitive market.
 10 Our company provides -- combines over
 11 25 years of experience in sheep husbandry with
 12 advanced education in immunology, botany, and
 13 engineering, and management, to provide a quality
 14 service to the solar project and residents within the
 15 viewshed of the project area.
 16 For many years, we have been breeding
 17 sheep to be uniquely suited to grazing under solar
 18 panels. Focusing on genetic parasite resistance and
 19 immune function and growth on grass.
 20 We have sold breeding stock at top
 21 production auctions across the eastern US and to other
 22 solar grazing operations, and found a niche breeding
 23 seed stock specifically for solar grazing.
 24 When we received a mailer several years
 25 ago informing us of the proposed Frasier Solar

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1 project, we quickly reached out to Craig from Open
 2 Road Renewables to ask about grazing the Frasier
 3 project.
 4 It felt very encouraging when Open Road
 5 was eager to incorporate grazing and wanted to partner
 6 with us to develop the grazing plan for the Frasier
 7 site and eventually sign a letter of intent with our
 8 company to graze Frasier.
 9 Thank you to the landowners for giving
 10 such a great opportunity to a new generation of
 11 farmers. I encourage this board to give special
 12 consideration to all projects with a strong commitment
 13 to agrivoltaics for all the benefits it will bring to
 14 the local communities and beyond.
 15 We look forward to bringing quality
 16 grass-fed lamb to Knox County dinner tables.
 17 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 18 Questions?
 19 Thank you.
 20 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 21 Tasha McKinney, and up next is Karen
 22 Schmitt.
 23 But Mr. Van Kley, is Karen an
 24 intervenor?
 25 If I could save you a trip. Yeah.

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1 Then up next would be Madonna Pierce.
 2 Ms. McKinney, are you an intervenor in
 3 this case?
 4 MS. MCKINNEY: I'm not.
 5 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 6 hand.
 7 WHEREUPON,
 8 TASHA MCKINNEY,
 9 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 10 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 11 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 12 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name and
 13 spelling for the record.
 14 THE WITNESS: Tasha, T-A-S-H-A,
 15 McKinney, M-C-K-I-N-N-E-Y.
 16 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and
 17 township.
 18 THE WITNESS: 5714 Range Line Road.
 19 That's Mount Vernon. And I live in the township of
 20 Morgan.
 21 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work
 22 near the project area?
 23 THE WITNESS: I reside.
 24 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 25 //

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1 DIRECT EXAMINATION
 2 THE WITNESS: Thank you. Okay.
 3 So I am present this evening to state
 4 my adamant opposition to the Frasier Solar project in
 5 Knox County. Over two decades ago, after a
 6 significant search, my husband and I carefully and
 7 specifically chose to purchase and settle our family
 8 here in Knox County. And we affectionately call it
 9 home.
 10 My township of residence, again, is
 11 Morgan. It borders Miller Township, with Range Line
 12 Road, the road that I live on, being basically the
 13 divider line between the townships. This is an area
 14 slated for one of the many projected industrial solar
 15 plants.
 16 We chose Morgan Township for the
 17 beautiful agricultural landscape, the wildlife, the
 18 tranquil sounds of nature, and the overall sense of
 19 brotherly community that is present in a rural
 20 neighborhood. All of these attributes would be lost
 21 should this industrial solar plant be permitted.
 22 The unsightly plant would be the view
 23 across the field from my front porch. The constant
 24 buzzing noise from the inverters would replace the
 25 wonderful nature sounds, and who knows what impact and

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1 negative ramifications are going to be on the
 2 wildlife.
 3 Additionally, the industrial solar
 4 plant would have detrimental impact on not only my
 5 property value, but the property values of all of my
 6 neighbors, the other community here in Knox County.
 7 Did no one at any official level in
 8 Knox County government let alone representatives at
 9 Frasier Solar, have the thought to solicit the general
 10 opinion of the residents of Knox County on the matter
 11 of installing solar panels in such large industrial
 12 volumes in our communities?
 13 And do so very openly and transparently
 14 prior to moving forward with any signed agreements?
 15 This certainly calls into question motives and intent.
 16 The betrayal and failure of certain
 17 elected officials to protect the residents of Knox
 18 County from this industrial intrusion is shameful.
 19 I dare say that the level of organized
 20 opposition that has emerged over this matter, with 17
 21 of our 22 townships adopting resolutions to deny this
 22 project, is certainly evidence enough to conclude that
 23 industrial solar is not wanted here by the majority.
 24 I can only trust that this board will
 25 hear out this opposition and conclude to deny this

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1 solar project.
 2 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 3 Questions?
 4 Thank you.
 5 Madonna Pierce, and up next is James
 6 Smith. Or -- it's in cursive; I can't really read the
 7 last name.
 8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There are many
 9 James that signed up --
 10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What number?
 11 JUDGE ASTA: Thirty-nine. Road is
 12 Banning Road, if that helps.
 13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You said Banning
 14 road?
 15 JUDGE ASTA: Yes. BANNINK. That's --
 16 oh, it's a G.
 17 Ms. Pierce, are you an intervenor in
 18 this case?
 19 MS. PIERCE: No, I am not.
 20 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 21 hand.
 22 //
 23 //
 24 //
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 MADONNA PIERCE,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE ASTA: Can you state your name
 7 and spell it for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: My name is Madonna,
 9 M-A-D-O-N-N-A, Pierce, P-I-E-R-C-E.
 10 JUDGE ASTA: And your address as well
 11 as township.
 12 THE WITNESS: 20648 Coshocton Road,
 13 Mount Vernon, Monroe Township.
 14 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
 15 the project area?
 16 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 17 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.
 18 DIRECT STATEMENT
 19 THE WITNESS: Okay.
 20 I struggled with the idea of coming
 21 forward because I knew there'd be many, many people
 22 who knew all the details about solar who knew all the
 23 details about farming. And I do have my own opinions
 24 about that, and I did research. But I knew it wasn't
 25 going to be as qualified as others.

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1 In the midst of all of this, in
 2 campaigning for our probably-commissioner in the fall,
 3 Drenda Keese, I, with my family, canvassed this whole
 4 county. And what -- it wasn't easy to do because I
 5 wasn't one to go step out and just do this. But we
 6 went house to house. And the point was, it was solar.
 7 It wasn't housing. You can throw that
 8 in there; it's not housing. Do we have housing
 9 problems? Maybe some of us dislike some of it. We
 10 need it. Yes, there are other problems in the county,
 11 but it's not that. What brought people out was the
 12 solar.
 13 They were upset because when did this
 14 happen? Why do we have no say in it? If our current
 15 commissioners that we just voted against had done
 16 their job, you probably wouldn't be here tonight.
 17 They would have listened and inquired of all of the
 18 community.
 19 We're not really a divided community.
 20 Everybody was very, very respectful and kind, even if
 21 they disagreed, but for the most part, everybody did
 22 not want it. Every farmer -- I ended up in all the
 23 farmer areas, driving through the countryside.
 24 They were angry. They were upset. I
 25 listened and then we had a conversation. They calmed

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1 down. And they hoped someone like Drenda would get in
 2 and stop this for them. They don't want it.
 3 And the other part that I felt I had
 4 was besides the people that have come here and
 5 retired, they've left Pickerington to move out here to
 6 be in the community they used to have before it was
 7 taken over by all the other developments. And they
 8 shared that with me. And they were considered because
 9 this is my retirement home.
 10 I had a couple who just retired. A
 11 minister. And they invited me into their home and
 12 they were concerned because the fields, the beautiful
 13 fields across the road from them, had been purchased
 14 out of county. And they were supposed to see a house,
 15 they thought, go up on it. And nothing happened and
 16 nothing happened and nothing happened.
 17 So I left there just sharing our
 18 brochures, encouraging them to vote. They ran out the
 19 door and said, wait, wait. Could you find out if
 20 solar is going in there?
 21 We have a whole community who does not
 22 want their home, their property, their life, to be
 23 destroyed with a thing that they invested in, and here
 24 they are. Even the people who have been against were
 25 kind. They were good. They were nice.

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1 But this should have been a community
 2 thing. This community has a lot of tourism, a lot of
 3 activities. A lot of the things that you see in
 4 Columbus that are all split up in the different
 5 communities.
 6 We have a turkey festival on one end.
 7 We have the gatherings here in Mount Vernon every
 8 summer. Fredericktown has a tomato festival. People
 9 come to these things.
 10 Schnormier -- I believe that's how you
 11 pronounce it -- they have built up out of Gambier, a
 12 whole place from this couple's travels from all over
 13 the world, and people come from Columbus and all
 14 around just to see it. And it's out in the hills up
 15 past 229.
 16 There are places everywhere here. The
 17 Amish have come in and they're part of our community,
 18 and we shop with them. They were very concerned. And
 19 they got out and they voted because they can only
 20 afford small plots here and there. They help each
 21 other. And they didn't want that coming into them.
 22 So what I'm really saying is, this
 23 should have been in the community, stayed in the
 24 community. And the people here are aggrieved about
 25 it. We can work out our differences, but we need to

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1 have a voice. And that's what we're asking you for.
 2 Thank you.
 3 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 4 Questions?
 5 Thank you.
 6 James Eck, and up next is Debbie Wells.
 7 Are you an intervenor in this case?
 8 MR. ECK: No.
 9 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 10 hand.
 11 WHEREUPON,
 12 JAMES ECK,
 13 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 14 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 15 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 16 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name and
 17 spell it for the record.
 18 THE WITNESS: My name is James Eck.
 19 Last name is spelled E-C-K.
 20 JUDGE ASTA: And your address --
 21 11155 Banning Road, Mount Vernon.
 22 And --
 23 JUDGE ASTA: Do you live or work near
 24 the project area?
 25 THE WITNESS: Not really close. No.

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1 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.
 2 DIRECT STATEMENT
 3 THE WITNESS: My wife and I have been
 4 residents in Knox County, very close to Mount Vernon,
 5 for the last ten years. We came here because we were
 6 attracted to the small town, a relatively rural
 7 community, well-located near a major airport and close
 8 to the basic needs of life.
 9 We were here long enough to see a
 10 number of companies downsize and move out of the
 11 community, which had some pretty devastating effects.
 12 We really want to see Knox County and Mount Vernon not
 13 only survive but grow.
 14 Now, this \$40 million first phase of
 15 this development, it has some tax credits associated
 16 with it. And according to the current law, everything
 17 -- pretty much everything that is development cost,
 18 the government -- federal government is providing a
 19 30 percent tax credits to the developer.
 20 Now, where did that money come from?
 21 It came from all of our federal taxes. And those
 22 taxes are designated nationwide for the development of
 23 solar energy. Now, we can choose either by approving
 24 this project to get a chunk of that money.
 25 And on a \$40 billion [sic] dollar

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1 contract, a 30 percent influx of federal tax dollars
 2 would amount to slightly in excess of \$13 million.
 3 So number one, if we turn this down,
 4 we're not only not going to get #13 billion [sic]
 5 worth of development funding invested in this
 6 community, but all of the taxes that we paid the
 7 federal government to support this program is going to
 8 go elsewhere, and we get nothing of that money.
 9 So I just don't want to see that
 10 happen. Okay? And I believe that the solar energy
 11 project is a good one. Okay? I've gone over the
 12 proposal. Okay? And it will cost Knox County
 13 absolutely zero. Okay?
 14 It's -- all of the development is being
 15 funded by Frasier, okay, and the federal government
 16 money. The county is not giving any taxes breaks to
 17 them. They're not being given any other kinds of
 18 incentives. And just the opposite, the agreement
 19 calls for us -- or for Frasier to support local, you
 20 know, benefits. Okay.
 21 Just quickly, if we're really
 22 interested in Knox County development as a whole, we
 23 cannot afford to give this county a bad reputation as
 24 a county that is not friendly to development. Okay?
 25 If we make that mistake, okay, then the opposite is

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1 true and it'll have lasting impact.
 2 JUDGE ASTA: And that's five minutes.
 3 Thank you.
 4 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 5 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 6 Any questions?
 7 Before you -- thank you, Mr. Eck. And
 8 if you have written testimony, you can provide it to
 9 the court reporter.
 10 Debbie Wells, and up next is Kim Frye.
 11 Ms. Wells, are you an intervenor in
 12 this case?
 13 MS. WELLS: No, I'm not.
 14 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 15 hand.
 16 WHEREUPON,
 17 DEBBIE WELLS,
 18 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 19 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 20 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 21 JUDGE ASTA: And could you please state
 22 and spell your name for the record.
 23 THE WITNESS: Debbie Wells. That's
 24 D-E-B-B-I-E, and the last name Wells is W-E-L-L-S.
 25 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and

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1 township?
 2 THE WITNESS: Clinton Township.
 3 Address is 7237 Sharp Road, Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050.
 4 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work
 5 near the project area?
 6 THE WITNESS: Every time I open my
 7 blinds, I will see whatever is in that field.
 8 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you. You may
 9 proceed.
 10 DIRECT STATEMENT
 11 THE WITNESS: Okay. I appreciate the
 12 opportunity given by the board to present this
 13 testimony. My name is Debbie Van Bremen Wells, and I
 14 support the Frasier Solar project.
 15 Thirty-two years ago, I was much
 16 younger and very excited to build my home on Sharp
 17 Road just south of Mount Vernon Ohio. A lot of the
 18 excitement was the fact that my father was a masterful
 19 builder and we were building my house together.
 20 All these years, I have opened the
 21 blinds of my living room windows and enjoyed the
 22 scenic view of an open field across the road. Now,
 23 this will change. But how and why? The land is
 24 changing ownership.
 25 Multiple units of lower income housing

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1 or solar panels will fill this place. This will be my
 2 view out the front window every day. For this reason,
 3 I hope the Ohio Power Siting Board will hear my voice
 4 and strongly consider my preferences.
 5 I stand in favor of the Frasier Solar
 6 project after much consideration, hard consideration,
 7 of the benefits and costs to me and my community. It
 8 is my choice of the two plans proposed. Despite all
 9 the flyers, internet posts, and newspaper articles, I
 10 see no reason that is valid or proven to halt the
 11 solar project.
 12 And I won't go through it, but I would
 13 like to present this widely distributed newspaper,
 14 that when I looked, I just found a shell of a website
 15 page to try -- find who put this.
 16 Particularly wanted to present it to
 17 the board because it has a, think I should say,
 18 Director Ann Vogels picture -- likeness on here. So
 19 just wanted to present it to make sure you had that.
 20 If this is the best argument for it, I
 21 don't see where it's that great of an argument, I mean
 22 against it. I don't see where it's that great of any
 23 argument.
 24 Frasier project and Open Road
 25 Renewables have addressed the concerns around the

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1 project. I have had to guard my own personal emotions
 2 and preferences since part of me wishes for no change.
 3 I really have enjoyed that view. But things will
 4 change.
 5 But none of this cancels the right of
 6 the property owner to sell his land as he wishes to
 7 whom he wishes. I hope and pray we can move forward
 8 as individuals, as families, as a community, to
 9 embrace this future.
 10 The financial benefits to our community
 11 our significant. And we can expect relief from taxes
 12 and levies. I personally will be looking for that.
 13 Why not let the community benefit rather than some
 14 landlord line their pockets from housing developments?
 15 I respectfully ask the Ohio Power
 16 Siting Board to hear the voices clearly of those like
 17 myself who will be directly affected by your decisions
 18 and that you will approve the Frasier Solar project.
 19 Thank you.
 20 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 21 Any questions?
 22 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 23 BY MR. SETTINERI:
 24 Q For the record, you had a flyer; right? Do
 25 you know, was that distributed countywide, to your

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1 knowledge?

2 A I think it was a widely -- widely -- I don't

3 know exactly, but I've seen it everywhere.

4 Q Do you think that contains misinformation to

5 the public?

6 MR. VAN KLEY: Objection. Friendly

7 cross.

8 MR. SETTINERI: Worthwhile for the

9 board to hear, Your Honor.

10 THE REPORTER: Can you come up to the

11 speaker to state your objection?

12 MR. VAN KLEY: This is friendly cross

13 at its extreme, Your Honor.

14 JUDGE HICKS: It is friendly cross.

15 Let's go ahead and move on.

16 MR. SETTINERI: No more questions, Your

17 Honor.

18 CROSS-EXAMINATION

19 BY MR. WIEGEL:

20 Q Did anyone solicit your testimony tonight?

21 A No. I was just made aware of the meeting.

22 And it meant so much to me about what happens across

23 the road from my house that I got on it.

24 Q How much land do you have at your house?

25 A At my land?

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1 Q Yeah, on your property.

2 A Just under three acres.

3 Q Okay. And is there any easements involved

4 with the project? Is it just, you're looking at it?

5 You don't have any agreements with --

6 A No. No easements. I haven't had to sign

7 anything for an easement. I just -- literally, it is,

8 I open my blinds and that is the field that it will

9 sit in.

10 Q And then, is there currently a proposal on

11 that land across from you for housing development?

12 A I don't think so. I think that is the

13 alternative plan.

14 Q But there is no proposal to your knowledge?

15 A Just the talk from the neighbors is, if it

16 is not -- if it is not -- the Fraiser project doesn't

17 go forward then the housing development will happen.

18 Q And that's just the rumor?

19 A You could call it that.

20 Q Thank you.

21 A But from people who know the owner of the

22 land. What was his -- I forget his name at his point

23 because I'm nervous, but from people who own the land

24 -- know the owner of the land -- Ramsey.

25 JUDGE ASTA: Kim Frye, and after Kim,

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1 Nick Bundren.

2 Ms. Frye, are you an intervenor in this

3 case?

4 MS. FRYE: I am not.

5 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right

6 hand.

7 WHEREUPON,

8 KIM FRYE,

9 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

10 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

11 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

12 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name and

13 spell it for the record.

14 THE WITNESS: Kim, K-I-M, Frye,

15 F-R-Y-E.

16 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and

17 township.

18 THE WITNESS: 21530 Newcastle Road,

19 Gambier, Harrison Township.

20 JUDGE ASTA: Do you live or work near

21 the project area?

22 THE WITNESS: I do not.

23 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.

24 DIRECT STATEMENT

25 THE WITNESS: I stand before you

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1 tonight as a native daughter of Mount Vernon. I'm

2 here to advocate for the advancement of utility-scale

3 solar projects in Knox County.

4 As we deliberate on the future of our

5 energy infrastructure, it is imperative to draw

6 insights from history during this unknown time.

7 History teaches us profound lessons,

8 especially regarding the consequences of rejecting

9 knowledge and stifling progress out of inimical fear

10 and self-indulgent reactions to suppress freedoms.

11 Throughout history, we have witnessed

12 the rise of authoritarian regimes and anti-democratic

13 revolutions often marked by a dangerous trend that has

14 echoed uncomfortably locally here in the opposition to

15 Frasier Solar.

16 For the past couple of years, the

17 suppression of knowledge, suspicion of academic

18 pursuits and vilification of scientific inquiry.

19 An instructor of environmental and soil

20 sciences for twenty-some years now, I sometimes

21 encounter the odd student who asks me why we spend

22 time on ethics during science courses.

23 I share with you today what I share

24 with them in these moments. A powerful example very

25 close to my heart: Trofim Lysenko's ill-fated

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 194</p> <p>1 influence on Soviet agriculture. 2 Lysenko, backed by the Soviet regime, 3 rejected mainstream genetics in favor of his so-called 4 proletarian science, which imposed purity of Marxist 5 ideals on agricultural understandings to the tune of 6 abject failure. 7 His pseudoscientific ideas not only 8 hindered agricultural progress for political favor but 9 also led to devastating and widespread famine, causing 10 the death of tens of millions of his fellow citizens. 11 Likewise, we cannot overlook China's 12 cultural revolution, a very dark chapter in human 13 history characterized by the demonization of 14 intellectuals and the suppression of knowledge once 15 again deemed incompatible with the anti-democratic 16 ideology. 17 During this tumultuous period again, 18 millions of lives were sacrificed, cultural heritage 19 was destroyed, nature was plundered unrestricted and 20 innovation was stifled all in the name of ideological 21 purity. 22 I witness frighteningly similar anti- 23 democratic behavior on a daily basis in the solar 24 opposition's ill-informed rhetoric that aims to drown 25 out reason with malice at the expense of individual</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 196</p> <p>1 just for standing up here now, as I hear their 2 snickers, as they called for the violence as Thom 3 Collier last night. 4 Individual liberties are so valuable to 5 me that I risk y social comfort, my emotional and 6 physical safety in my hometown to speak to you today 7 for solar utility. That's how much I believe in this 8 solar project as a way to protect all of our natural 9 resources, bolster the traditional energy revenue such 10 as our rich natural gas reserves. 11 It is simply false and remiss to pit 12 them against one another at a time when our energy 13 demands are growing exponentially. I ardently echo 14 the calls for an all of the above approach to local 15 energy. Thank you. 16 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you. 17 Any questions? 18 Thank you, Ms. Frye. 19 Nick Bundren, and up next is Brenda and 20 Rick McCament. But I'm pretty sure they're 21 intervenors as well. 22 We will come back to you. 23 So after Nick is Sally M. Berger. 24 So Mr. Bundren, are you an intervenor 25 in this case?</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 195</p> <p>1 freedoms. 2 All because seeking first to understand 3 what you do not know, maintaining open minds and 4 hearts, embracing the difficulties of democracy 5 requires more effort than indulging, inciting, and 6 stoking fear. Do not allow public policies to be 7 dictated by the latter at the individual land rights 8 and strongly supported science. 9 These historical examples underscore a 10 fundamental truth: the rejection of knowledge and 11 suppression of scientific inquiry for any ideological 12 purpose of purity breeds stagnation and unnecessary 13 suffering. 14 As we consider the transition to 15 renewable energy, I urge you to heed these lessons. 16 Embracing utility-scale solar projects in Knox County 17 represents a commitment to progress, innovation, and 18 economic stability. 19 And I want to fight for today even as a 20 large portion of my own family and fellow Knox 21 Countians eschew civil debate, demonstrated tonight, 22 in order to embrace the more easily accessible, 23 unregulated, vociferous, and emotionally immature, and 24 at times violent behavior over this choice. 25 I expect to experience more the same</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 197</p> <p>1 MR. BUNDREN: No, I am not. 2 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right 3 hand. 4 WHEREUPON, 5 NICK BUNDREN, 6 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn 7 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but 8 the truth, was examined and testified as follows: 9 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name and 10 spell it for the record. 11 THE WITNESS: Nick Bundren, N-I-C-K 12 B-U-N-D-R-E-N. 13 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and 14 township. 15 THE WITNESS: I reside at 3754 Sunrise 16 Lake Circle, Columbus, Ohio. 17 JUDGE ASTA: Do you work near the 18 project area? 19 THE WITNESS: I do not. 20 JUDGE ASTA: Please proceed. 21 DIRECT STATEMENT 22 THE WITNESS: Well, good evening, 23 ladies and gentlemen. My name is Nick Bundren, and 24 I'll be speaking on behalf of a nonprofit called the 25 Ohio Land and Liberty Coalition.</p>

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1 We represent a group of conservatives
 2 across the state of Ohio that advocate for property
 3 rights and renewable energy. And tonight I'll be
 4 speaking about why our property rights should be
 5 protected and why this project should be approved.
 6 You see, our rights are sacred here in
 7 America. It's what keeps us free, and it's what keeps
 8 America great in general. Our founding fathers
 9 understood this so they enshrined them into our
 10 Constitution. This includes the right to acquire,
 11 use, and dispose of property without interference from
 12 the government.
 13 And these property rights are not
 14 exclusive. They include things like developing our
 15 land for solar. And, folks, there are bad actors all
 16 across this great nation that are attempting to
 17 restrict our rights on all fronts.
 18 Now, whether it be federal officials
 19 trying to restrict our gun rights or radicals trying
 20 to take away our freedom of speech, it's very clear
 21 that our rights are under assault today.
 22 We can't allow any of rights to be lost
 23 because unfortunately, once they're gone, they do not
 24 come back. Allowing our local governments to restrict
 25 property rights for landowners just because a group of

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1 people are upset sets the precedent for far more
 2 restrictions later down the road.
 3 Imagine a world where the government is
 4 telling a landowner that they can't do what they want
 5 with their land. That sounds like 1984 to me. And
 6 unfortunately, that's what's happening right now all
 7 across the state.
 8 Just because we do not like solar or we
 9 disagree with a farmer developing his or her land does
 10 not mean we can restrict or infringe upon those
 11 rights. Those rights are given by God and not the
 12 government. They cannot be taken or infringed upon.
 13 In fact, tonight's hearing is exactly
 14 why our founding fathers included the exact term God-
 15 given, so that even when a group of people are angrily
 16 shouting to take away our rights, they will not be
 17 taken away.
 18 A vote of approval for this project
 19 will be a vote to protect property rights while also
 20 being a win for landowners not just here in Knox
 21 County but all across our great state. And I hope
 22 everyone here understands just how important this
 23 hearing tonight really is.
 24 Even if we don't like solar, we must
 25 support the right to develop land the way the

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1 landowners see fit. Support property rights. Support
 2 our constitution. And support Frasier Solar.
 3 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 4 Any questions? No?
 5 Thank you.
 6 Sally M. Berger, and up next is Miriam
 7 Dean-Otting.
 8 Ms. Berger, are you an intervenor in
 9 this case?
 10 MS. BERGER: No, I am not.
 11 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 12 hand.
 13 WHEREUPON,
 14 SALLY M. BERGER,
 15 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 16 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 17 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 18 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name and
 19 spell it for the record.
 20 THE WITNESS: My name is Sally Berger,
 21 S-A-L-L-Y B-E-R-G-E-R.
 22 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and
 23 township.
 24 THE WITNESS: I live at 115 East
 25 Hamtramck Street in Mount Vernon, Ohio. And I believe

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1 that's Clinton Township, but I'm not positive.
 2 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work
 3 near the project site?
 4 THE WITNESS: No, I do not.
 5 JUDGE ASTA: Please go ahead.
 6 DIRECT STATEMENT
 7 THE WITNESS: I've lived in Knox County
 8 for 36 years, and retired after 30 years of working
 9 with people with developmental disabilities. I'm
 10 active in my church and the local music community.
 11 I am here to testify in favor of the
 12 Frasier Solar project, as we need renewable energy
 13 sources that do not harm our environment. This
 14 project has a projected 40-year lifespan.
 15 During that time, the soil will rest
 16 and renew itself by being fallow. And at the end of
 17 the project, the land will be suitable to return to
 18 agricultural use.
 19 I was raised on a dairy farm in
 20 northeast Ohio. And I remember seeing the ugly debris
 21 piles from abandoned land and unregulated strip mining
 22 that left acres of useless land and toxic groundwater.
 23 I also believe in individual land
 24 rights, and that landowners should be allowed to use
 25 their land to generate income as long as it does not

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1 infringe on the health and safety of their neighbors.
 2 As to the argument that it needs to
 3 stay as farmland, I would remind others how difficult
 4 it has become to earn a living as an individual family
 5 farmer. As more and more farmers have to give up
 6 farming, their land is going to be sold for housing
 7 developments or other uses that will permanently
 8 remove those acres from agricultural use.
 9 In conclusion, I believe that the
 10 Frasier Solar project will benefit Knox County
 11 residents in providing jobs, increasing revenues, and
 12 creating clean energy. Thank you.
 13 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 14 Any questions?
 15 Thank you.
 16 Miriam Dean-Otting?
 17 Then next up is Jim Heironimus. And
 18 then after Jim, Jerry Kelly.
 19 Are you an intervenor in this case?
 20 MR. HEIRONIMUS: I am not.
 21 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 22 hand.
 23 //
 24 //
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 JAMES HEIRONIMUS,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name and
 7 spell it for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: My name is James
 9 HEIRONIMUS. Yeah. Not an easy one.
 10 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and
 11 township.
 12 THE WITNESS: 772 Highland Hills Drive,
 13 Howard Township.
 14 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
 15 the project area?
 16 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 17 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.
 18 DIRECT STATEMENT
 19 THE WITNESS: Good evening. Thank you.
 20 I'm retired Air Force, and I've been a
 21 member -- a resident of the Knox County for over 18
 22 years. I'm currently Ohio Certified volunteer
 23 naturalist and I work part time at the Brown Family
 24 Environmental Center as a environmental educator.
 25 I'm speaking briefly. Many things have

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1 already been said, and I will spare the audience and
 2 everyone.
 3 But just briefly, to mention a few
 4 points, I would like to speak in favor of the Frasier
 5 Solar project because this is an effort that will
 6 boost the county's power supply using an
 7 environmentally positive and renewable power source.
 8 And I think that's important.
 9 What I've seen in a significant influx
 10 in this whole issue, which is an exceptionally
 11 relevant issue with very good points pro and con,
 12 worthy of discussion. But what I've seen that's been
 13 very disheartening is an influx of misinformation,
 14 unfounded speculation, and hyperbole.
 15 And that's unfortunate because it
 16 prevents us from having a realistic discussion of this
 17 very important topic for the county. That said, I'll
 18 just mention one point of many that I had wanted to
 19 say.
 20 The issue of subsidies keeps coming up.
 21 And hopefully everyone realizes that there are a
 22 number of industries that are subsidized in this
 23 country. The United States does this in an effort to
 24 promote what they feel are needed ventures.
 25 So renewables have definitely been a

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1 focus of this of late. But for many, many years, the
 2 oil and gas industry have received subsidies. Just
 3 last year, between 10 to 50 billion dollars of
 4 subsidies went to oil and gas.
 5 And I don't see that as a bad or a
 6 good. It's just if the government sees the need for
 7 it, it is supporting those needs. And that's what
 8 subsidies are.
 9 What happens with them, well, that's
 10 what here to try to help with too. I would like to
 11 say I'm skipping over many points.
 12 As far as aesthetics, I can't speak
 13 completely to the environmental issues as much as I
 14 would like to and as much as that's a great interest
 15 to me. But I will tell you I've not been able to
 16 study all of the aspects of that to soundly comment.
 17 But as far as aesthetics, I do know
 18 that the plans that I've read online and seen proposed
 19 look very good as far as the plantings that are
 20 proposed. Barrier plantings, overall appearance of
 21 the area, and posing reasonable distances between any
 22 of the solar panels and surrounding roads and
 23 properties.
 24 I will conclude just saying solar
 25 energy, it's a renewable energy that does not add

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1 carbon-based pollutants to our air. It offers
 2 multiple benefits for our growing energy needs in Knox
 3 County, especially with whatever the impending influx
 4 will be from neighboring projects such as Amazon and
 5 Intel that our knocking on our door.
 6 Economically, it would be a boost, as
 7 has been mentioned by others. And energy-wise, it
 8 would provide our county with needed diversification
 9 of energy sources. I thank you for this opportunity
 10 to speak.
 11 JUDGE ASTA: Any questions?
 12 Mr. Van Kley?
 13 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 14 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 15 Q Have you visited any of the other solar
 16 facilities that have been built in Ohio to check out
 17 the plantings that they put around them -- Hillcrest?
 18 A That is a very -- that's a very good
 19 question. I have not seen their plantings.
 20 Q So you haven't seen the plantings, if there
 21 are any, around the Hillcrest facility owned by Open
 22 Roads?
 23 A No. The only project I was studying was
 24 this one.
 25 MR. VAN KLEY: Okay. Thank you.

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1 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor, I just
 2 object to that last question based on
 3 mischaracterizing the ownership of the Hillcrest
 4 project. Thank you. It's not owned by Open Road.
 5 JUDGE ASTA: It's noted. Thank you.
 6 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you.
 7 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 8 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 9 JUDGE ASTA: And if you have written
 10 testimony that you'd like to provide, you may do so.
 11 THE WITNESS: Thank you. No. You
 12 couldn't read it if you wanted.
 13 JUDGE ASTA: Okay. Thank you.
 14 Jerry Kelly, and up next, Felicia
 15 Allen.
 16 Mr. Kelly, are you an intervenor in
 17 this case?
 18 MR. KELLY: I am not.
 19 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 20 hand.
 21 WHEREUPON,
 22 JERRY KELLY,
 23 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 24 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 25 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

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1 JUDGE ASTA: And please state your name
 2 and spell it for the record.
 3 THE WITNESS: My name is Jerry Kelly,
 4 J-E-R-R-Y K-E-L-L-Y.
 5 JUDGE ASTA: And your address and
 6 township.
 7 THE WITNESS: My address is 402 Chase
 8 Avenue in Gambier. That is College Township.
 9 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work
 10 near the project area?
 11 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 12 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.
 13 DIRECT STATEMENT
 14 THE WITNESS: I'd like to speak in
 15 support of the Fraiser project. Farmers who choose to
 16 harvest sunlight energy along with row crops and
 17 livestock should be free to do so on their own land.
 18 Solar can preserve farmland from
 19 suburban-style development that would eliminate any
 20 future farming on that land. Farmland preservation is
 21 better served by solar than by those other forms of
 22 development.
 23 PV solar is a proven transitional
 24 technology that can help us solve our energy dilemma
 25 and provide us with cleaner power. To me, that

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1 represents progress, and I support it.
 2 Thank you for hearing us and for the
 3 work you do to ensure a stable and secure Ohio grid.
 4 We trust in your good faith and best judgment. Thank
 5 you.
 6 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.
 7 Any questions.
 8 Mr. Van Kley?
 9 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 10 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 11 Q What's your occupation?
 12 A I am retired. And I teach part time at
 13 Kenyon College.
 14 Q What do you teach?
 15 A I teach a solar power course. That's funny.
 16 You should learn something about it.
 17 JUDGE ASTA: Mr. Kelly, one moment.
 18 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 19 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 20 Q So you said you teach a solar power course
 21 at Kenyon college.
 22 A Correct.
 23 Q Did you request any of your students file
 24 public comments in this matter?
 25 A No.

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1 Q Do you know if any of your students did file
 2 public comments in this matter?
 3 A I'm not sure. They may have. They were
 4 exposed to both sides of this issue.
 5 Q Okay. And there was no incentive to support
 6 or -- in favor or against the project?
 7 A That's correct.
 8 MR. WIEGEL: Okay. Thank you.
 9 JUDGE ASTA: Any further questions?
 10 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 11 Q Do you know if your course is contributed to
 12 our funded by the Frasier, Open Roads or the solar
 13 energy industry at all?
 14 A It is not. It is not.
 15 Q Thank you.
 16 A Thank you.
 17 JUDGE ASTA: Felicia Allen, and up
 18 next is Flint -- 6017 Sharp Road.
 19 You can wait right there. I just
 20 wanted to make sure I got your name. You're up next
 21 But first, Felicia Allen.
 22 Are you an intervenor in this case?
 23 MS. ALLEN: No.
 24 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
 25 hand.

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 FELICIA ALLEN,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name
 7 and spell it for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: My name is Felicia Allen.
 9 It's F-E-L-I-C-I-A A-L-L-E-N.
 10 JUDGE ASTA: And your address as well
 11 as township.
 12 THE WITNESS: Address is 1319 Mound
 13 Street. And that is in Clay Township in Portsmouth,
 14 Ohio.
 15 JUDGE ASTA: Do you --
 16 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 17 JUDGE ASTA: You don't work --
 18 THE WITNESS: No, I do not.
 19 JUDGE ASTA: You may go ahead.
 20 DIRECT STATEMENT
 21 THE WITNESS: So I am an Ohio solar
 22 worker. I've been working solar in Ohio since 2020.
 23 And jobs like this -- like, I depend on jobs like this
 24 feed to my family. I understand that, you know, this
 25 is your guys's community, but there's been a lot of

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1 misinformation that's been spread.
 2 It's easy to get misinformation when
 3 it's new. And I understand this is all new to
 4 everybody. You know, like, this is going to help your
 5 community so much. There's going to be -- there's
 6 people out there that work at Taco Bell right now.
 7 You know, and they're -- they can't make ends meet,
 8 you know.
 9 But jobs like this come in and you can
 10 build careers out of jobs like this. Like, I'm 40
 11 years old. I've lived in Ohio all my life, and I've
 12 been under the poverty line for 37 years. You know,
 13 like, jobs like this, it helps people. And that's why
 14 I'm here.
 15 And I want people to know that, like,
 16 once the project is approved, it doesn't just stop
 17 there. Like, the Siting Board doesn't just say,
 18 "okay," and leave. Like, there's regulations on
 19 everything from start to finish. Like, that's why we
 20 have these rules in place.
 21 That way, these projects can get built
 22 and be built the right way for the community and for
 23 everybody 'cause we have to have something
 24 sustainable. These fossil fuels aren't going to work
 25 forever.

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1 And we have to find an alternate
 2 source. And from what I've seen from where I've
 3 started in solar to now, the rules have changed.
 4 Like, we all have to start somewhere.
 5 And maybe the beginning wasn't the best, but we're
 6 trying every year to make it better. And we're trying
 7 to make it better for everybody. Like, I'd like to
 8 see -- I'd like to leave something to my future
 9 generations. And that's all I have.
 10 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you. Before you --
 11 THE WITNESS: Sorry.
 12 JUDGE ASTA: Any questions?
 13 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 14 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 15 Q Can you explain a little bit about what you
 16 do as a solar worker?
 17 A Yeah, I work out in the field. I actually
 18 build these farms, industrial solar farms.
 19 Q Okay. So once a project is finished that
 20 you've built, you need another solar farm to come to
 21 continue your work?
 22 A Yes. Operations and maintenance, they
 23 usually keep five to ten people all the time.
 24 Q Okay. In Knox County job creation, you
 25 would come into the build it and go back to

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1 Portsmouth?

2 A I would, but I'd spending half of my money

3 in your county and all of my money would stay in the

4 state of Ohio because I would still keep my house in

5 Portsmouth but I would and come and stay at your hotel

6 in Knox County.

7 And I would use your gas stations, and I

8 would use your Walmarts, or just whatever you have

9 here. So half of my money is going to go to your

10 county.

11 Like, we did two projects -- by Cincinnati,

12 and there was a, just, little gas station, didn't have

13 to sell gas anymore because we made a million dollars

14 in a year. Like, there -- it stimulates the economy.

15 Like, it's better than nothing.

16 Q Until you leave though.

17 A Right. But I'm always in the state of Ohio,

18 so no matter what, my dollars stay in the state. So

19 every -- I hear everybody talk about quality of life,

20 but what about the workers' quality of life?

21 You know, I would rather stay in the state

22 of Ohio and work and my money stay in the state than

23 having to go out of state and look for work. I have

24 small children.

25 You know, like, this is the best job

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1 opportunity that I've ever had in my life, and I don't

2 want to lose it. And I think that it would benefit

3 the community a lot.

4 Q And then my last question is, can you

5 confirm that the long-term jobs, it's just five to

6 ten --

7 A Don't quote me on that. I can't say that

8 for sure. But I just know that there's -- the more

9 projects than -- see, so Ohio has a domicile form in,

10 like, you have to have 70 percent Ohio residents to do

11 these jobs. So my big thing is the money stays in

12 Ohio. It stays in the community. That's it.

13 Q Thank you.

14 A Yeah.

15 JUDGE ASTA: And I believe it's Clint?

16 Is that correct?

17 MR. BYWATERS: No, ma'am.

18 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right

19 hand.

20 WHEREUPON,

21 ROBERT BYWATERS,

22 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

23 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

24 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

25 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name

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1 and spell it for the record.

2 THE WITNESS: Robert Bywaters,

3 B-Y-W-A-T-E-R-S. 6017 Sharp Road, Mount Vernon,

4 Miller Township.

5 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work

6 near the project site?

7 THE WITNESS: Yes, ma'am.

8 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.

9 DIRECT STATEMENT

10 THE WITNESS: And I am opposed to the

11 Frasier Solar project. My wife and I love the beauty

12 of our rural landscape and observing the sunrise and

13 sunset over the fields. I worked hard to obtain my

14 land, same for neighbors. We would have to see it

15 replaced with solar panels, especially for the next 40

16 years.

17 Research says panels do not even have a

18 40-year lifespan. Wildlife would be impacted.

19 Inverter noise could be heard for up to a 1-mile

20 radius. We'll have two inverters that we'll be able

21 to listen to all the time.

22 There is a concern for hazardous waste

23 such as cadmium and lead and for runoff. Concern for

24 what would happen if the company defaulted. Our land

25 value will decrease.

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1 I thank you for your consideration,

2 especially since this arrangement was in the works

3 long before any of the landowners who would be

4 negatively affected were made aware, so we could

5 respond in a timely manner.

6 It is apparent that some people will

7 stand to make a lot of money, but the landowner has

8 much to lose. Thank you.

9 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

10 Any questions for this witness?

11 Thank you, Mr. Bywaters.

12 With that, we are going to take a brief

13 ten-minute break. And we will come back right back,

14 and we will pick up with Scott Patterson, 51.

15 THE REPORTER: Okay. We are going off

16 the record at 9:15 p.m.

17 (Off the record.)

18 THE REPORTER: We are back on the

19 record at 9:30 p.m.

20 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Folks, we are

21 officially back on the record. I have an announcement

22 to make that there's just a mathematical reality that

23 we have the building until a little before midnight.

24 We have had 43 witnesses thus far. And we have signed

25 up somewhere north of 140.

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1 So there is just a reality that we are
 2 not going to be able to get everyone in before we are
 3 forced to vacate the building tonight.
 4 And keeping in mind that we want to
 5 allow everyone the opportunity to testify that has
 6 signed up to testify, we just wanted to announce that
 7 we will plan to hold a second local public hearing.
 8 Thank you.
 9 Don't have any details on that on that
 10 moment as obviously we are going to have to facilitate
 11 where it will be, what time it will be. But we will
 12 ensure that there is sufficient notice given out to
 13 everyone as to when that will occur, what time it will
 14 occur, where it will occur.
 15 And just to reiterate, if you have
 16 signed up to testify tonight and you are not able to
 17 testify tonight or we don't get to you tonight, the
 18 plan would be that at this second public meeting that
 19 will be scheduled you will then have the opportunity
 20 to testify. And we will proceed as we have done
 21 tonight.
 22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 98: So do we all
 23 have to sit here to find out whether or not we're
 24 going get to speak by midnight? I'm number 98. Is
 25 there a reason to --

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1 JUDGE HICKS: There's no chance you're
 2 going to get to speak tonight before midnight.
 3 And frankly, we have to be out of here
 4 at midnight. So it's about 11:30 we're going to have
 5 to start to shut things --
 6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- 75 go home?
 7 JUDGE HICKS: I'm sorry?
 8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Number 98 you
 9 said could go home. Could number 75 go home?
 10 JUDGE HICKS: Yes. It --
 11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: A lot of people
 12 have left, sir.
 13 JUDGE HICKS: Yeah. That's what I'm
 14 saying. If you are signed up to testify -- if you
 15 have to leave at this point -- if you are signed up to
 16 testify, you will have the opportunity to testify at
 17 the second local public hearing.
 18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The question is,
 19 will you start where you left off tonight?
 20 JUDGE ASTA: Yes.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Yes. That would be the
 22 intention. Same order, wherever we end tonight.
 23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: If everybody
 24 takes five minutes that's left, that's about 20-ish
 25 more people. So if you know your number, like 75,

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1 you're probably --
 2 JUDGE HICKS: I can see Mr. Settineri
 3 has a question.
 4 MR. SETTINERI: You read me well.
 5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Microphone.
 6 MR. SETTINERI: Sure. For the next
 7 public hearing, is it -- we're just going to finish
 8 the sign-up sheet?
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Correct. It's folks that
 10 are signed up to testify tonight.
 11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And no one else?
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Correct.
 13 MR. SETTINERI: And does it make sense
 14 for anyone who has a longer drive to just testify now?
 15 Just a common courtesy.
 16 MR. WIEGEL: Just as a possible
 17 recommendation, could we just set a time, 11:30 or
 18 11:15 so that anyone who knows that they want to
 19 leave, and that'll just cutoff so we're not dealing
 20 with numbers and math?
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Yes. 11:30, we are not
 22 taking any more testimony.
 23 MR. WIEGEL: Perfect. Thank you.
 24 JUDGE HICKS: The midnight is, we need
 25 to be out of here at midnight. So facilitate cleanup,

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1 folks getting out of the building, we're going to cut
 2 it off at 11:30.
 3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: If somebody
 4 leaves and missed their turn --
 5 JUDGE HICKS: If they are signed up,
 6 they can testify at the next hearing.
 7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just a point of
 8 clarification, what counts as sufficient notice for
 9 the next meeting?
 10 JUDGE HICKS: I'm sorry?
 11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: As a point of
 12 clarification, what counts as sufficient notice for
 13 the next meeting please?
 14 JUDGE HICKS: So that, I mean, we're --
 15 it's a little bit of uncharted territory here. We're
 16 going to have to discuss that, frankly. It's not --
 17 let me put it this way, it's -- the --
 18 THE REPORTER: I don't know how I'm
 19 going to be able to note all of the speakers who are
 20 yelling from the office. So I just want to be clear
 21 about that.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Her question was
 23 what will be the notice. It is not going to be a
 24 situation where it's Friday, is what I'm telling you.
 25 We're going to have to be able to secure a venue and

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1 plan for folks to be able to attend, counsel to
 2 attend, folks up here to attend.
 3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So is April 29th
 4 still going to go on?
 5 JUDGE HICKS: I'm not sure we know at
 6 this point. Yeah. The reality is, it may get pushed.
 7 Mr. Settineri may not feel one way or another on that,
 8 but it's likely that that would need to get pushed in
 9 order to facilitate enough time to have another public
 10 hearing.
 11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Keep going.
 12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Let's go.
 13 JUDGE HICKS: So Scott Patterson is up.
 14 On deck is Susan Moore, who I believe is an
 15 intervenor.
 16 Mr. Van Kley? Moore?
 17 MR. VAN KLEY: What's the last name?
 18 JUDGE HICKS: Moore.
 19 MR. VAN KLEY: Yes, she's an
 20 intervenor.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. So she will go
 22 onto the list for circling back to intervenors. So on
 23 deck will be Ron Cameron.
 24 Mr. Patterson, are you an intervenor in
 25 the case?

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1 MR. PATTERSON: I am not.
 2 JUDGE HICKS: Please raise your right
 3 hand.
 4 WHEREUPON,
 5 SCOTT PATTERSON,
 6 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 7 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 8 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 10 your name for the record.
 11 THE WITNESS: Scott Patterson,
 12 S-C-O-T-T P-A-T-T-E-R-S-O-N. And my address is 21530
 13 Newcastle Road. That's Harrison Township. I do not
 14 live nor work in the area.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 16 DIRECT STATEMENT
 17 THE WITNESS: So we've heard a lot of
 18 testimony from the people against this venture. And
 19 there seems to be some, like, weird undercurrent that
 20 it is somehow an outside interest that is trying to
 21 get their paws into Knox County.
 22 And as Knox County born, bred here,
 23 grew up here, my whole life here, making my life here,
 24 continue to be here, I take great offense to that. I
 25 am from Knox County. I am of Knox County. I will be

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1 in Knox County for the rest of my days.
 2 I teach at the high school here, where
 3 I have vested interest in not just what happens during
 4 my lifetime but the next lifetime, the next lifetime,
 5 the next seven generations. That's who I'm interested
 6 in. That's who I'm here to speak for today.
 7 If we're looking at farmland, I'm
 8 surrounded by farms. There are two separate
 9 cornfields within view of my house. I hear cows at
 10 night from the Old Horton's cow farm.
 11 Already, we've lost at least six acres
 12 that I've seen, turned into two separate new houses.
 13 This idea that we are competing for either having the
 14 farm still or having a solar field is not reality.
 15 If we put a housing development on this
 16 land, on average, it takes about 500 years to a
 17 thousand years to build one inch of new good soil.
 18 Anybody that's farmed will tell you, if you don't have
 19 at least 18, and that's going to be skimming it, good
 20 luck.
 21 If we pave over that farmland, if we
 22 build housing developments on it, not only will the
 23 runoff be worse than anything else that it could
 24 possibly be turned into, but it will never be farmland
 25 again, probably not ever, probably not in any of our

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1 descendant's lifetimes.
 2 Just looking at the size of the
 3 installation. We're going 225 to 250 megawatt-hours
 4 per year.
 5 So little bit of napkin math: if it
 6 takes about 1.14 pounds of coal to make one kilowatt
 7 hour, we're looking at, with the price of coal being
 8 about .15 cents per pound, we're looking at AEP
 9 spending 3.8 to 4.2 million dollars less on coal to
 10 power our houses with that solar array going in in the
 11 Frasier.
 12 Those are savings they could pass along
 13 to us. That's not even accounting for the fact that
 14 we get to keep the tax revenue. We get to keep that
 15 land in the hands of the farmers. The farmers are not
 16 selling land; they are leasing the land.
 17 I have a vested interest in this
 18 community, and that is in the best interest of this
 19 community. I would love for it to stay farmland. I
 20 think we all want it to stay farmland.
 21 But what we're doing right here, it
 22 really feels like the opposition is trying to cut off
 23 our own nose to spite our face. I don't want to look
 24 at solar panels. I want to look at a cornfield. I
 25 want it to be that way forever. It's not going to be.

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1 If we're talking about food, I don't
 2 know about you guys, but I don't eat a lot of field
 3 corn. I'm not a big soy boy either. Now, I do
 4 understand that about a third of the corn grown in
 5 this county goes directly into the production of E85.
 6 I don't eat that either.
 7 On average, about half the corn
 8 produced in our county is going to feed. The rest of
 9 it gets directly exported to Asia. A large amount of
 10 it, likely to China. That is what we're doing with
 11 these fields.
 12 I've heard people talk about the pride
 13 in the local stickers at the grocery store. When you
 14 see the I'm local sticker on a store, just so you guys
 15 know, that could come from Michigan, which is, by the
 16 way, the "I'm local" apples that you get at
 17 Kroger -- they're Michigan apples.
 18 Kentucky, Tennessee, even down to
 19 Georgia. Most of the produce you buy at the store
 20 comes from either California or Florida. If you're
 21 not buying produce at the local farmers market, you
 22 are not buying local produce.
 23 We need to diversify our energy needs.
 24 And we need to diversify our land use. It is the only
 25 way forward. Things are changing and Knox County is

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1 changing with it.
 2 I understand what we have here with
 3 Frasier is a half measure. Having the option for
 4 solar plus having sheep on it is not going to be as
 5 great as just having another sheep farm, or even
 6 better yet an actual farm.
 7 But I feel like it is an adequate
 8 compromise that I think we should approve, because we
 9 need to let the farmers do what they need to do to
 10 keep the land in their family, in the family of Knox
 11 County citizens. Thank you.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 13 Any questions from counsel?
 14 Thank you for your testimony.
 15 Up next is, I believe it's Ron Cameron.
 16 MR. CAMERON. Right here. I'm here.
 17 JUDGE HICKS: On deck is David Godwin.
 18 Mr. Cameron, are you an intervenor in
 19 the case?
 20 MR. CAMERON: No, I'm not.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Can you please
 22 raise your right hand.
 23 //
 24 //
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 RON CAMERON,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please state
 7 and spell your name for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: My name is Ron Cameron,
 9 R-O-N C-A-M-E-R-O-N. 7419 Sharp Road, Mount Vernon.
 10 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 11 in the project area?
 12 THE WITNESS: I live right across from
 13 a hundred acres of proposed solar panels. Yeah.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Please go ahead with your
 15 testimony.
 16 DIRECT STATEMENT
 17 THE WITNESS: I've lived in Knox County
 18 for 51 years. I'm in favor of the Frasier Solar
 19 project. I've lived on Sharp Road for 46 years. And
 20 I haven't seen much change in all that time. But I do
 21 love farmland.
 22 By the way, Mr. Patterson, who preceded
 23 me, he's a hard one to follow because I think he
 24 stated a lot of good facts.
 25 But if t he solar project doesn't

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1 succeed, the 100 acres right across from me is
 2 currently zoned for planned neighborhood development.
 3 And under planned neighborhood development, six to
 4 eight residences per acre could be constructed. That
 5 translates on a hundred acres to 600 to 800
 6 residences.
 7 Think about the cars, people, noise,
 8 the entire complexion of the area where I've lived for
 9 46 years would change. The hundred acres will never
 10 be farmland again.
 11 With solar, it can be farmland and
 12 solar for the next thirty-five-plus years, since sheep
 13 can graze around the panels.
 14 Secondly, in this whole situation, the
 15 issue of property rights needs to be considered. And
 16 that's already been talked about a lot, so I'm not
 17 going to explain any more about it. But a farmer
 18 can't decide what he wants to do with his own land?
 19 Again, I'm in favor of the solar
 20 project.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 22 Any questions from counsel?
 23 Thank you for your testimony.
 24 Up next is David Godwin, and on deck is
 25 John Norris.

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1 Mr. Godwin, are you an intervenor in
 2 the case?
 3 MR. GODWIN: No.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 5 right hand.
 6 WHEREUPON,
 7 DAVID GODWIN,
 8 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 9 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 10 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 12 spell your name for the record.
 13 THE WITNESS: David, D-A-V-I-D, Godwin,
 14 G-O-D-W-I-N.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: And your address
 16 including township?
 17 THE WITNESS: 7093 Sharp Road. And I
 18 live in Clinton Township.
 19 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 20 in the project area?
 21 THE WITNESS: Yes. Across the street
 22 from me is a big planned solar field.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 24 with your testimony.
 25 //

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1 DIRECT STATEMENT
 2 THE WITNESS: Okay. I've lived on
 3 Sharp Road in southern Knox County for 38 years. I've
 4 been living right across the street from a big
 5 cornfield which the farmers plant every May and then
 6 return in October and harvest the corn.
 7 A couple years ago, Frasier Solar
 8 representatives came to me and asked me what I thought
 9 about if they plant solar panels across the street
 10 from me. And they explained everything in whole --
 11 and the whole program in detail.
 12 I met with the solar representatives to
 13 get more information on what they were going to do and
 14 I found out that their plan was very beneficial to our
 15 community.
 16 When corn is planted in May, it grows
 17 until October. Then it's harvested, and then the
 18 ground sits vacant for six months out of the year
 19 until next spring and they'll plant corn again. So
 20 you only get six months out of the cornfield, and it
 21 has to sit empty.
 22 When the solar panels are planted, they
 23 absorb the sun's rays every day for 365 days a year.
 24 The sunrays are then converted to electricity every
 25 day, which will -- they'll produce enough energy to

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1 power up approximately 14,000 homes. I think that's a
 2 pretty good deal.
 3 We all need electricity for our homes
 4 and for our businesses. We all depend on electricity
 5 for everything. Solar panels are clean-running,
 6 renewable, and run silently. A lot of people say they
 7 make a lot of humming sound. Well, from the research
 8 I've did, they do make a very slight sound, but not
 9 something you're going to hear for many distances.
 10 Frasier Solar reps have put their plans
 11 in writing and with pictures, graphs, and details on
 12 their installation, landscaping, sharing their profits
 13 with the city of Mount Vernon, Clinton Township, and
 14 Miller Township.
 15 Our community is growing every year
 16 with new houses and businesses. We need more
 17 electricity to keep our community operating. I'm
 18 asking you all to help us keep our community growing
 19 and operating by letting Frasier Solar produce more
 20 electricity for our homes and businesses. I thank
 21 you.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 23 Any questions?
 24 //
 25 //

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1 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 2 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 3 Q Have you signed a good neighbor agreement
 4 with the solar company?
 5 A Yes.
 6 Q Okay. And are you getting paid money for
 7 doing that?
 8 A I don't want to talk about my personal
 9 ventures with them.
 10 Q Well, it's a simple question. I'm not going
 11 to ask you how much you're getting. I just want to
 12 know whether you're getting some money --
 13 A Well, I think -- I think if you look on the
 14 website, you know all the good neighbor agreements,
 15 there is some money transacted.
 16 Q So does that mean you're getting money for
 17 it?
 18 A For the good neighbor? Yes.
 19 Q Okay. With regard to your comments about
 20 the sound from a solar facility, have you ever visited
 21 the Hillcrest solar facility to listen there, listen
 22 for yourself how much sound is coming from that
 23 facility?
 24 A No. But those facilities are older. The
 25 new ones here are going to probably work a lot more

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1 efficiently just like new cars work more efficiently.
 2 So I'm not an expert on that.
 3 Q Okay. Let's talk about a newer one, then.
 4 How about the Hardin solar facility. Have you gone
 5 out there and listened to that one?
 6 A No.
 7 MR. VAN KLEY: Okay. Thank you.
 8 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you for your
 9 testimony.
 10 Up next is John Norris, and on deck is
 11 -- I'll take a shot: Merlin Thirion-Gueltas. If I'm
 12 even close, you're own deck.
 13 Mr. Norris, are you an intervenor in
 14 the case?
 15 MR. NORRIS: Pardon?
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Are you an intervenor in
 17 the case?
 18 MR. NORRIS: No.
 19 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 20 right hand.
 21 WHEREUPON,
 22 JOHN NORRIS,
 23 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 24 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 25 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 2 your name for the record.
 3 THE WITNESS: Okay. I'm not totally
 4 against solar --
 5 JUDGE HICKS: Hold on, sir. I need you
 6 to state and spell your name for the court reporter.
 7 THE WITNESS: Oh, I'm sorry. And my
 8 address --
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Spell your name for the
 10 court reporter, please.
 11 THE WITNESS: J-O-H-N N-O-R-R-I-S.
 12 10444 Monroe Mills Road, Gambier, Harrison Township.
 13 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 14 in the project area?
 15 THE WITNESS: No, I do not.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 17 DIRECT STATEMENT
 18 THE WITNESS: Okay. I'm not totally
 19 against solar. In fact, I've had solar put on my barn
 20 roof here in December. But what I am against is
 21 putting solar on our farmland. I think there's
 22 alternatives.
 23 I was approached by several companies.
 24 They were what you call community solar, not this
 25 industrial solar. And I wasn't approached your

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1 outfit. But I thought I had the perfect place.
 2 My farm is on a hillside, and my farm
 3 slopes to the south. And I thought this is kind of
 4 waste land. It would a prime opportunity to put solar
 5 on not-prime farmland. And I thought sheep would
 6 actually do better on a hillside than on this
 7 flatland.
 8 But I'm against -- yes. Farmland is
 9 the strength of our country. And I oppose, for that
 10 reason. And the other thing, we've had two
 11 experiences with big companies on our own farm.
 12 We had a -- when my grandfather bought
 13 the farm, there was a railroad went through the farm.
 14 And their agreement when they bought the land was to
 15 build fence.
 16 Well, they -- it just -- you couldn't
 17 get them to build fence. Finally, the county, thank
 18 goodness, bought the railroad bed and put in a bike
 19 path. And the county, being a good neighbor, they
 20 built new fence on anyone that wanted fence for their
 21 livestock.
 22 The county did care about their -- the
 23 land -- the landowners, which appeared to me the
 24 railroad did not.
 25 Then we had a -- also, we had a high

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1 tensile power line went through our property. And
 2 when they went through, they told my father that the
 3 tower would be in the pasture field.
 4 And so when they came to put the tower
 5 in, they put it right in the corner of the farm field.
 6 And my dad said, you supposed to put that in the
 7 pasture field.
 8 He said, "Did you read the fine print?"
 9 That -- "We got the right to move that tower so many
 10 feet either way." So my experience -- my personal
 11 experience with large companies coming in, they don't
 12 always agree to what they say they are.
 13 I'm not saying anything about Frasier
 14 Solar, but my experience from that past. And when
 15 they wanted to put solar on my prime farmland,
 16 farmland that I tore out fences to make it one
 17 field --there was five fields -- farmland that I put
 18 tile -- systematically tiled on, they wanted my best
 19 land for solar.
 20 And I was not -- that was the end. I
 21 wasn't going to do that. That's all I've got to say.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 23 Any questions?
 24 Thank you for your testimony.
 25 So for the person who was on deck, if

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1 it helps with my mispronunciation, the address is 102
 2 Gaskin Avenue. Okay. We will move on. Next on the
 3 list is Nick Redmond. Brittany Redmond?
 4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They had to
 5 leave earlier.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Thank you.
 7 Steve Rex Sr.?
 8 Jack Wessels?
 9 Amy Rowley?
 10 And next on the list is Ashley Labaki.
 11 845 Sunset Avenue, if that helps.
 12 Are you an intervenor in the case?
 13 MS. ROWLEY: No.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Please raise your right
 15 hand.
 16 WHEREUPON,
 17 AMY ROWLEY,
 18 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 19 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 20 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
 22 your name for the record.
 23 THE WITNESS: Amy Rowley, A-M-Y
 24 R-O-W-L-E-Y. Address is 4810 Range Line Road, Mount
 25 Vernon, Ohio. It's Morgan Township, which is right on

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1 that division line, you know, Miller Township is right
 2 across the road.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. So --
 4 THE WITNESS: So I do live right across
 5 the street from where a project is going to be. In
 6 fact, our property will surround three sides or a
 7 large portion that borders on Range Line, Sycamore,
 8 and Lafayette.
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 10 DIRECT STATEMENT
 11 THE WITNESS: I'm opposed to the
 12 Frasier Solar project. My husband and I purchased our
 13 farm in 1989, and with God's provision, family, and a
 14 lot of blood, sweat, and tears, we grew it into what
 15 it is today.
 16 And as I said, it surround three sides
 17 of the project tract on Sycamore, Range Line, and
 18 Lafayette.
 19 We've completed several projects on our
 20 farm in compliance with the Knox County Soil and Water
 21 Conservation District. Those are all on file if you
 22 want to confirm that. It was grass waterways, tile
 23 projects, and conservatory tillage efforts.
 24 We did that because we also believe in
 25 those systems to preserve our farm ground, preserve

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1 our community for our future generations.
 2 We're all called to be good stewards of
 3 the land, and I believe that firmly. I'm very
 4 concerned about our health and our immediate
 5 environment and beyond as to what the extent of harm
 6 these solar panels and supporting structures may do.
 7 For instance, after a heavy rainfall,
 8 we have much flooding that crosses the road at Range
 9 Line in front of our house in two places. I have
 10 pictures that I will submit from Tuesday's storm.
 11 The stream flows directly into the
 12 Sycamore Creek that flows south into Licking County
 13 and into the North Fork Licking River and beyond.
 14 So you can see the effects of just the
 15 runoff from whatever is coming those solar panels and
 16 whatever would happen in tornadoes, hail, that we've
 17 experienced recently -- not the tornadoes but it can
 18 happen and go into the water and way on down far-
 19 reaching effects.
 20 I'm also concerned about the loss of
 21 our property values. We want to keep our farm in a
 22 family -- in our family and operational. With the
 23 environmental impacts, damage to our tile system, and
 24 loss of natural resources, it'll make it difficult for
 25 future generations to succeed.

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1 Our son, his wife, and three precious
 2 little children will be almost completely surrounded
 3 by these solar panels. This will definitely have an
 4 impact on their property value as well as all of us in
 5 the area.
 6 And then there's the noise level.
 7 Roche from Open Road sat at my kitchen table, told me
 8 that the noise level would be a problem. The solar
 9 panels themselves don't make noise, but they require
 10 inverters and they're very large.
 11 And that is what makes the sound. And
 12 it's like loud locusts. So she admitted to me that
 13 the noise would be a problem even with the setback
 14 from our son's home and our home, it would be very
 15 loud.
 16 And she agreed it would just be a
 17 problem. And she had no solution for it. And that
 18 will be right behind my son and daughter-in-law's
 19 house. And who knows what that noise will have as an
 20 effect on our wildlife.
 21 And I just want to mention a little
 22 something about the whole sheep grazing idea, speaking
 23 of the animals. Anyone that's ever owned a sheep,
 24 which I have had -- growing up, we had sheep --
 25 they're the -- not very smart animal.

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1 They need a shepherd. They will stick
2 their head in whatever they can. They're going to
3 stick their heads in these -- the solar panels turn.
4 They invert. So that needs that inverter to make that
5 work.
6 So they're moving. These sheep are
7 going to stick their heads in there. They're going to
8 get, you know, flipped around. They're going to die
9 out there. Plus, you know, sheep grow wool. They
10 get -- they get heavy with wool. They're going to be
11 very, very hot out there.
12 Plus, the solar panels create more
13 heat. So in reality, they said that these sheep --
14 the sheep grazing is only going to create like five
15 more jobs. So and then with them having to supplement
16 the sheep grazing with gas-powered lawnmowers, I just
17 don't see that that's the be-all end-all.
18 And I would like for us, maybe, you
19 know, we're not -- thinking about solar and how much
20 things have changed, all of us have had cell phones
21 that are outdated within six months.
22 So these solar projects are for 40
23 years. They're going to be skeletons out there, just
24 like we all the great big satellite in our backyard.
25 We thought we were so call.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Ms. Rowley --
2 THE WITNESS: Now, that's like
3 non-existent.
4 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you. We've hit
5 your five minutes.
6 Any questions?
7 Mr. Settineri?
8 MR. SETTINERI: Very briefly.
9 CROSS-EXAMINATION
10 BY MR. SETTINERI:
11 Q Have you had a chance to review the staff
12 report that was issued?
13 A I'm sorry. Repeat that.
14 Q Have you had a chance to review the Ohio
15 Power Siting Board staff report and recommendation on
16 the project?
17 A No. I looked at the staffing -- the board
18 members, but I did not find the -- what you're talking
19 about.
20 Q Okay. That report has conditions that
21 relate to a certificate if a permit is issued for
22 this --
23 A I'm sorry. I can't hear. I'm having a
24 little trouble hearing.
25 A Sure. No problem. That staff report and

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1 recommendation contains conditions that staff
2 recommends for permits issued. Is that -- would you
3 consider reviewing that report after tonight?
4 A Sure.
5 Q Okay. Thank you.
6 A Mm-hmm. Thank you.
7 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
8 So up next, Ashley, it looks like
9 Labaki. 845 Sunset Avenue.
10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She left.
11 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. How about Aaron
12 Brown? And on deck is Rich Piar. 15461 Vance Road.
13 Mr. Brown, are you an intervenor in the
14 case?
15 MR. BROWN: I am not.
16 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please raise
17 your right hand.
18 WHEREUPON,
19 AARON BROWN,
20 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
21 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
22 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
23 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
24 your name for the record.
25 THE WITNESS: Yeah. It's Aaron Brown,

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1 A-A-R-O-N B-R-O-W-N. My address is 5545 Nave Street
2 Southwest, Canton, Ohio 44706.
3 JUDGE HICKS: Do you live or work in
4 the project area?
5 THE WITNESS: I do not.
6 JUDGE HICKS: Please go ahead.
7 DIRECT STATEMENT
8 THE WITNESS: All right.
9 Good evening, everybody. My name is
10 Aaron Brown, and I'm with the IBEW. As someone who's
11 seen this transformative impact of energy generation
12 projects firsthand for more than 25 years, I came here
13 tonight to talk about how energy projects bring
14 strength to these communities that they host -- that
15 host them.
16 I'm proud to support the Frasier Solar
17 project. And I believe the long-term benefits of this
18 project hold immense promise for our future here in
19 Knox County, in the neighboring counties, and the
20 whole state.
21 One of the key things about this
22 project that excites me is the job creation. We've
23 been building energy projects since we were founded in
24 1891, and our union members will almost certainly play
25 a pivotal role in making this project a success.

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1 I have full confidence in our ability
 2 to deliver because we've done it before successfully
 3 on all kinds of energy generation projects:
 4 transmission projects, battery projects, and more.
 5 Unlike some of the other projects we
 6 build, this project is going to be producing
 7 electricity with no pollution at all. Just think
 8 about that. It's really pretty amazing that we're
 9 able to do these projects.
 10 I think the board should find comfort
 11 in the fact that Open Road is looking to leverage out
 12 extensive training, our expertise, and dedication to a
 13 job well done. We have the capability to ensure this
 14 project is not only completed efficiently but also to
 15 the highest standards of quality and safety.
 16 The truth is, I support all forms of
 17 energy. When our members are working on power lines,
 18 we don't care where electricity is coming from, as
 19 long as we keep the people's lights on or get their
 20 power back on as quickly as possible like our members
 21 have been doing in Indian Lake after their tornadoes
 22 that went through.
 23 But modernizing our power grid and
 24 diversifying our sources of energy to add more solar
 25 alongside other traditional sources of energy will

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1 keep us and make sure our power stays on when sources
 2 fail during an extreme weather event, which we've seen
 3 recently in other states where gas plants failed to
 4 come online while wind and solar plants kept pumping
 5 out the power.
 6 And with these new advances in energy
 7 storage, now we can produce power with renewable
 8 energy when it's cheap and abundant, store it, and
 9 then put it back in the grid when we need it.
 10 As Ohio's solar industry grows, the
 11 IBEW will continue to support these good paying energy
 12 sector jobs that are diversifying our power grid and
 13 powering our communities.
 14 Frasier Solar, with over 25 million in
 15 earnings and 350 jobs on the horizon, isn't just about
 16 racking up panels in these landowner's fields. It's
 17 about building the future of this county and our
 18 state.
 19 Frasier Solar's commitment to the pilot
 20 program, which includes hiring 70 percent of the
 21 workforce right here in Ohio, speaks volumes about the
 22 project's dedication to Knox County by keeping as much
 23 of the benefits of this project as local as possible.
 24 The pilot program is set to pay over a
 25 million dollars in county taxes every year for up to

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1 40 years. This is revenue that's going to benefit the
 2 Mount Vernon city school district, the local health
 3 and community centers, our emergency services for
 4 township, and so much more.
 5 Look around the state and you can see
 6 the positive transformation that's happening in these
 7 project communities. The long-term impact of this
 8 project and the local economy cannot be overstated.
 9 Beyond the immediate construction
 10 phase, which will provide hundreds of jobs and inject
 11 millions into our economy, we must consider the
 12 lasting benefits it will bring.
 13 For us electrical workers, the training
 14 we receive translates into decades-long careers that
 15 sustain our families for a lifetime with a dignified
 16 middle-class lifestyle.
 17 And I just want to just say and put it
 18 on the record that, you know, I am a 25-year member of
 19 the IBEW, and what I see coming forward is something
 20 that we can have our kids and our grandkids a part of.
 21 I'm just glad to be here able to
 22 support the Frasier Solar project here tonight. We
 23 really hope to build this project. I respectfully ask
 24 that the board not stand in the way of economic
 25 growth, local job creation, and a stronger power grid,

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1 and to support the Frasier Solar project. Thank you
 2 for your time.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 4 Any questions?
 5 Mr. Van Kley?
 6 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 7 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 8 Q The electrical that works that do the
 9 electrical work at the solar projects are usually the
 10 individuals who have the least amount of experience
 11 with electrical; isn't that true?
 12 A I would not say that's true.
 13 Q No? So you wouldn't say that most of the
 14 electrical workers who work on these electrical
 15 projects are novices at electrical work?
 16 A No, it's a combination of journeymen and
 17 apprentices.
 18 Q Okay. And what's the ratio between the
 19 journeymen and the apprentices at these facilities?
 20 A So they vary project to project or
 21 determined by that collective bargaining agreement.
 22 Q Okay. Can you give me a range?
 23 A Usually it's 1:2, 1:3.
 24 Q One journeyman --
 25 A One journeyman to two apprentices or three

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1 apprentices.

2 Q Okay. Thank you.

3 A Mm-hmm.

4 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you for your

5 testimony.

6 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

7 JUDGE HICKS: Next on the list is the

8 one I had trouble pronouncing. Rich Piar. I'm sorry?

9 Piar. Rich Piar. I take it that he has left? Next

10 it Samantha Bartram.

11 UNIDENTIFIED: Rich is here.

12 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Samantha

13 Bartram -- hopefully I'm saying that right -- is here.

14 She is on deck.

15 MS. BARTRAM: I am coming.

16 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Mr. Piar was

17 actually here, so you will be on deck.

18 Are you an intervenor in the case?

19 MR. PIAR: No.

20 JUDGE HICKS: Please raise your right

21 hand.

22 //

23 //

24 //

25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,

2 RICHARD PIAR,

3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

6 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell

7 your name for the record.

8 THE WITNESS: Richard Piar,

9 R-I-C-H-A-R-D P-I-A-R.

10 JUDGE HICKS: And could you please

11 provide your address including any township.

12 THE WITNESS: 15461 Vance Road, Mount

13 Vernon, Ohio 43050, Miller Township.

14 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or

15 work in the project area?

16 THE WITNESS: Yes.

17 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.

18 DIRECT STATEMENT

19 THE WITNESS: So I'm a third-generation

20 farmer. And my big concern is property rights. My

21 family and I, we've taken the chances and

22 opportunities to buy properties over the years but

23 make our mortgages, pay our taxes.

24 And not to be able to do we want to do

25 with the properties -- it's an investment for us. I

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1 mean, it's a lifestyle for us, but, you know, I'm the

2 last of my generation. So something is going to

3 happen to the ground. And I have multiple parcels in

4 the solar lease project.

5 And is up to us to decide what we'd

6 like to do with the properties. And I hear various

7 concerns here. I don't like the opposition, as far

8 don't like to upset people. But, you know, it's a

9 family choice. Things we want to do.

10 And I hear comments about the weather.

11 I personally have solar on my barn, and it's probably

12 eight years old, and still is -- been through

13 hailstorms and stuff.

14 I don't see any cracks or anything on

15 those panels. I go up to inspect them yearly. So I

16 don't see that as being a major problem so far. Not

17 saying it can't be, but I don't see it at this point

18 on my personal use.

19 And I guess if anyone else could buy

20 the ground as well as I could, you know, it's the

21 chances we took but most people aren't risk takers

22 like that. Don't want to spend the money.

23 Trying to think -- some other comments

24 on there. Sorry. Drawing a blank. I guess that's

25 about all I have to say.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.

2 Any questions from counsel?

3 THE WITNESS: Oh, I guess -- sorry.

4 And the whole process of -- we've had

5 probably 18 different solar projects. And I was, as a

6 farmer, and this is my 39th full time year, I felt

7 comfortable after talking with Craig Adair on the

8 project, I felt very comfortable.

9 And we made so many different changes

10 in the lease that -- for conservation, erosion,

11 topsoil, disposing of the products off the farm to

12 certified sites after the fact, being bonded, went

13 through the whole process, made lots of changes,

14 concerned about the neighbors as far as water runoff

15 and stuff, and tried to make some things put in the

16 contract as well as feel very comfortable with them

17 following through with what they say.

18 JUDGE HICKS: Mr. Van Kley?

19 CROSS-EXAMINATION

20 BY MR. VAN KLEY:

21 Q How far is the house that you live in from

22 the nearest solar panels that are going to be

23 installed?

24 A I guess about two miles.

25 Q Okay. So you won't be able to see the solar

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1 panels from your house?
 2 A No.
 3 Q Okay. Do you have any plans to move out of
 4 the area in the future?
 5 A No.
 6 MR. VAN KLEY: All right. Thank you.
 7 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 8 BY MR. WEIGEL:
 9 Q The original -- when you had the original
 10 discussions, what were some of the concerns that you
 11 were able to get changed in your agreement?
 12 A Some of them were the drainage. They would
 13 repair the tile as needed. And I said I was kind of
 14 concerned about that. And we have in there that
 15 replacing the tile system at the end of the project,
 16 if need be.
 17 Q So that wasn't in your original lease?
 18 A No.
 19 Q Do you know if that change has been made in
 20 any of the other leases?
 21 A You mean other landowners?
 22 Q Yes.
 23 A No.
 24 Q So yours might be special and something that
 25 was of a concern to you might not be in other people's

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1 leases.
 2 A I have no idea.
 3 Q Okay. What were some of the other concerns
 4 you had?
 5 A Leaving the topsoil on the property, not
 6 taking it off the property. Water use stays on the
 7 property -- don't sell to a third party. The solar
 8 panels have to be removed and taken to certified
 9 places, recycle or whatever, but off the property.
 10 Talked about the neighboring properties, if
 11 they have a problem with drainage, having language in
 12 there so that they can be taken care of.
 13 Q And those weren't in the original agreements
 14 that they presented to you?
 15 A We tweaked the language a little bit. And
 16 then noxious weeds, making sure they control noxious
 17 weeds.
 18 Q Okay. So had you signed originally, though,
 19 none of these things would have been taken care of?
 20 None of the concerns that you have would have been
 21 taken care of?
 22 A Not in the original lease. No. But they
 23 understood and they were willing to make the changes.
 24 Q And then you said you live in Mount Vernon;
 25 correct?

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1 A My farm is technically two counties, two
 2 townships.
 3 Q I'm sorry. Where you reside, the address
 4 that you --
 5 A Yeah. It's two counties, two townships.
 6 Q Okay. And that's your permanent residence?
 7 A Yes.
 8 Q Do you have any other residences in Ohio?
 9 A I've got homes on different farms.
 10 Q That's all. Thank you so much.
 11 A Yes.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you for your
 13 testimony.
 14 THE WITNESS: Thanks.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Up next is Samantha
 16 Bartram. Am I saying that correctly?
 17 MS. BARTRAM: You are.
 18 JUDGE HICKS: Great. On deck is
 19 Christy Preston.
 20 Are you an intervenor in the case?
 21 MS. BARTRAM: I am not.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Please raise your right
 23 hand.
 24 //
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 SAMANTHA BARTRAM,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 7 spell your name for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: My name is Samantha,
 9 S-A-M-A-N-T-H-A, Bartram, B-A-R-T-R-A-M. And I live
 10 at 1181 Gambier Road. That's in Mount Vernon. And
 11 that's Pleasant Township.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
 13 work in the project area?
 14 THE WITNESS: I do not. I live about
 15 three miles from the project area.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Please go ahead.
 17 DIRECT STATEMENT
 18 THE WITNESS: I just want to say thanks
 19 to everyone who's still hanging out in this room after
 20 all this time. I appreciate that.
 21 I'm a, pretty much, lifelong resident
 22 of Knox County. I was born in Mount Vernon. I grew
 23 up on a farm in Fredericktown. My family has lived in
 24 this county my entire life.
 25 And I know from sitting here all night

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1 that I'm far from the only person in this room who has
 2 lived here either their whole life or several decades
 3 in this area and who feel very strongly about it, feel
 4 a real affinity for it.
 5 And, you know, I'm almost 45 and not
 6 really much has changed in this area since I was a wee
 7 little girl. But things are changing. The world is
 8 changing. And change will eventually come for Knox
 9 County.
 10 And as frustrating as that may feel and
 11 as scary and upsetting as it might be, it is probably
 12 time for us to start to think about how we can use our
 13 open spaces to benefit our community, to benefit our
 14 world, to combat climate change. And solar energy is
 15 a part of that.
 16 And I'm not going to go through all of
 17 the reasons why. Instead, I'll just hit a couple
 18 little arguments I've heard tonight that are sticking
 19 with me: the chemicals that will leach off the
 20 panels, the panels will break, et cetera.
 21 There's order of magnitude of studies
 22 out there including from Frasier but also from the
 23 Federal Department of Energy. And you can go to their
 24 website and you can read about what these panels are
 25 made of and what they are up to -- what they can

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1 withstand, weather-wise. The hail that we get in this
 2 county is not big enough to break these solar panels.
 3 If we're worried about chemicals
 4 leaching off the solar panels, we might also worry
 5 about agricultural runoff from all of the fields that
 6 perhaps use chemicals like roundup to control weeds
 7 and pests and what the runoff from all of those
 8 chemicals might be doing to our land, to our
 9 groundwater.
 10 I've heard we don't have enough sun
 11 here to sustain solar power. But amazingly, according
 12 to the USDA, in 2023, almost 14 million acres of
 13 farmland in Ohio was in active production making corn,
 14 hay, soybeans, alfalfa, vegetables, livestock.
 15 So somehow, we have sun to support all
 16 of that agriculture but we don't enough sun to support
 17 solar energy. Just curious to me.
 18 Also heard a lot tonight about property
 19 rights, how we should keep this farmland in
 20 production. We seem to be totally erasing the agency
 21 of the landowners who apparently don't want to farm
 22 their farmland.
 23 I have complicated feelings about
 24 property rights, but that's the way it is in our world
 25 right now. They have the right to do whatever they

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1 want with their land, and this is what they've chose
 2 to do. And I think as neighbors and community
 3 members, we can all respect that.
 4 I think the last thing that I'll say is
 5 there's been a lot of talk about supporters of solar
 6 getting paid to be here tonight. I've not received
 7 one dime from Frasier. Maybe you can put your hands
 8 up, anyone in here who has received money to be here
 9 to speak tonight.
 10 No? No one. If you're talking about
 11 the good neighbor agreement, you can look on their
 12 application. You can look on the Siting Board staff
 13 report. The good neighbor agreement includes a
 14 \$10,000 one-time payment or \$600 a year, I believe, in
 15 subsidies to offset your electrical believe.
 16 I'm sure the attorneys can correct me
 17 if I'm wrong on that. That's what these folks are
 18 getting. They're not getting a lifetime payment.
 19 They're not getting millions of dollars to allow solar
 20 on their land. They are getting bare minimum
 21 inconvenience fee for the time that this project is
 22 being constructed.
 23 So I don't know. If I were any of you
 24 and someone, especially someone running for elected
 25 office, were standing up here accusing me of being

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1 paid to speak and apparently not smart enough to do
 2 the research myself or form my own opinion, I'd be
 3 lightly offended by that.
 4 I'll say, in closing, I truly hope that
 5 the Siting Board takes into consideration all the very
 6 thoughtful testimony you've heard tonight, and that
 7 you consider approving the project. Thanks.
 8 JUDGE HICKS: Any question from
 9 counsel?
 10 Thank you for your testimony.
 11 THE WITNESS: Thanks.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Up next is Christy
 13 Preston. And on deck is Hannah Patton.
 14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hannah's not
 15 here. She had to leave.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Thank you. So
 17 next on the list on deck would be Sara Lynn Kerr.
 18 Ms. Preston, are you an intervenor in
 19 the case?
 20 MS. PRESTON: No.
 21 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 22 right hand.
 23 //
 24 //
 25 //

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1 WHEREUPON,
 2 CHRISTY PRESTON,
 3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 7 spell your name for the record.
 8 THE WITNESS: Christy Preston,
 9 C-H-R-I-S-T-Y P-R-E-S-T-O-N. My address is 15700
 10 Nixon Road, and I live in Miller Township.
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
 12 work in the project area?
 13 THE WITNESS: Both.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 15 DIRECT STATEMENT
 16 THE WITNESS: First of all, I am
 17 opposed to the Frasier Solar project. I have many
 18 reasons. I will have to see the solar panels in the
 19 fields everyday as well as hear the constant hum. The
 20 seeing is not as bad to me as the noise and the
 21 constant hum.
 22 In doing research to the safety of
 23 living near the industrial solar fields, if you Google
 24 it, you can pull up like 29,000 different hits. So
 25 there are different opinions on everything. Nothing

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1 is conclusive. It just depends on who paid for that
 2 study as to what they found, basically.
 3 I don't feel that it's a hundred
 4 percent safe to be surrounded by a solar field. This
 5 is not -- there would not be the first time that
 6 people were told, oh, it's safe to live here or live
 7 here by this factory, by this water, whatever, and
 8 then they found out years later when everybody has got
 9 cancer that oops, it wasn't safe. "We're sorry.
 10 Here's your settlement."
 11 I don't want to be one of those that
 12 find out years from now that me, my kids, my
 13 grandkids, have something because oops, these weren't
 14 as safe as we were sold the bill of goods they were.
 15 I think more research needs to into
 16 that before they're around everybody's house. That is
 17 not the only reason that I oppose this project.
 18 I feel that it disturbs our peaceful
 19 properties. It reduces our property values. It may
 20 not in California, but we're not in California. We're
 21 in rural Ohio, and it will impact our property values.
 22 I have concerns for the environmental
 23 impacts as well as the wildlife impacts. I'm also
 24 very concerned of what happens when Open Roads is out.
 25 When they sell it to someone else, who is going to

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1 police that they do everything that they said they
 2 were going to do?
 3 If you look at Brown County or the
 4 other ones, yes, I'm sure that they've learned from
 5 that, but there are still other mistakes being made.
 6 And I worry about those.
 7 The majority of the residents in this
 8 township have spoken loudly about the opposition to
 9 this project. The recent local election has been
 10 brought up several times, but is a clear example to
 11 that.
 12 I understand that people are in favor
 13 of green energy. And if they want that in their home,
 14 in their state, in their township surrounding their
 15 house, I am totally fine by that. I won't go to their
 16 township and pose my opinion.
 17 But this is my township we're talking
 18 about. This is my home. Our township has spoken, and
 19 we do not want it in our township. We don't want --
 20 have to deal with the consequences of what goes wrong.
 21 I ask that you please put -- protect our houses like
 22 you protected Governor DeWine's. Thank you.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
 24 counsel?
 25 Thank you for your testimony.

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1 Up now is Sara Lynn Kerr, and on deck
 2 is Nanette Cales.
 3 Ms. Kerr, are you an intervenor in the
 4 case?
 5 MS. KERR: I am not.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 7 right hand.
 8 WHEREUPON,
 9 SARA LYNN KERR,
 10 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 11 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 12 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 13 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 14 spell your name for the record.
 15 THE WITNESS: Sara, S-A-R-A, Lynn,
 16 L-Y-N-N, Kerr, K-E-R-R.
 17 JUDGE HICKS: And your address
 18 including township?
 19 THE WITNESS: I'm at 1300 Westwood
 20 Drive, Mount Vernon. I am in Clinton Township. And I
 21 am within a mile of one of the sites.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Please go ahead.
 23 DIRECT STATEMENT
 24 THE WITNESS: Several times tonight
 25 we've referenced -- counsel has asked and you have

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1 asked whether we've read the staff report. Page 63,
 2 number 58 does raise concern about the disposal.
 3 Number 58: "At the time of the solar
 4 panel end of life disposal, any retired panel material
 5 that is not recycled and that is marked for disposal
 6 shall be sent to an engineered landfill with various
 7 barriers and methods designed to prevent leaching of
 8 materials into soils and groundwater or another
 9 appropriate disposal location at the time of
 10 decommissioning by the approved staff."
 11 So I do believe this staff has said in
 12 their report that there could be leaching, and it's
 13 dangerous.
 14 We live in an amazing time, an amazing
 15 place, and an especially amazing landscape in Knox
 16 County, Ohio. I have been to 46 states and eight
 17 countries, and I have never been as at home as I am in
 18 Knox County where I was born.
 19 I am privileged to use and take for
 20 granted all utilities. We are in America, taking
 21 utilities for granted is granted by the responsibility
 22 of our government for good choices, common sense, and
 23 forward thinking.
 24 I indeed want to weigh in on the
 25 introduction of solar use in the Midwest on farmland.

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1 Agriculturally rich and worked for centuries. I am
 2 against solar in Knox County.
 3 The decision for solar started long
 4 before Knox County citizens had a clue that our rural
 5 character was under attack to be changed forever.
 6 Forced upon us in a very deliberate, strategic,
 7 methodical way.
 8 Big dollars, tax incentive, and a rush
 9 for land that is at the very fabric of our lives.
 10 My greatest concern is the lack of time
 11 and consideration for education and the responsibility
 12 for consideration of both sides. Yes, to industrial
 13 solar, or no to industrial solar.
 14 You might just hear why beautiful,
 15 productive, agricultural acres, why does the
 16 information not include comparison to all energy
 17 adequate to our needs? Why isn't there a complement
 18 of national effort geographically managed? Why so
 19 fast?
 20 Green new deals and subsidies reek of
 21 legislation without the amalgamation of
 22 considerations. The Ohio Power Siting Board had a web
 23 of activity sown before one resident had been
 24 contacted.
 25 The move to solar without proper

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1 acknowledgment or documentation or accurate
 2 comparisons project only one side of this torrential
 3 discussion. We are the victims. We are the addresses
 4 in Knox County.
 5 Your decision on March 20th, funneling
 6 an avenue to industrial solar on farmland in Knox
 7 County, exaggerates the need to stop right where we
 8 are and evaluate this big step.
 9 I want to hear and see conclusions
 10 based on Knox County residents, those opinions, the
 11 ones that live here will bear the outcome. It is one
 12 thing to meet the requirements and it is another thing
 13 to be good stewards.
 14 We need to all be educated. We need to
 15 sort fact from fiction. We need to recognize theory
 16 from experience. I ask you, what do you want to
 17 harvest? What do we want to harvest? Thank you.
 18 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 19 Mr. Settineri?
 20 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 21 BY MR. SETTINERI:
 22 Q Good evening.
 23 A Good evening.
 24 Q You led with the staff report and the
 25 conditions. So I assume --

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1 A Briefly and quickly.
 2 Q Did you read condition 7, which states "the
 3 applicant shall only use solar panel modules that do
 4 not exhibit the characteristic of toxicity, verified
 5 through analysis or documentation of the U.S. EPA's
 6 toxicity characteristics leaching procedure test.
 7 "Prior to the pre-construction conference,
 8 the application shall file confirmation that panels
 9 were analyzed through the U.S. EPA's toxicity
 10 characteristics leaching procedure test."
 11 Did you read that condition when you read the
 12 staff report?
 13 A I might have. But the condition that that
 14 has to be -- that there's concern when it is
 15 decommissioned, what is that full concern?
 16 Q And does condition 7 provide you some
 17 comfort regarding the panels in the fact that there's
 18 a U.S. EPA, what we call TCLP test?
 19 A And they will each year. They'll get
 20 better, I'm sure.
 21 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you. No further
 22 questions.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 24 Thank you for your testimony.
 25 Up next is Nannette Cales, and next on

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1 the list is Daniel C. Baker Sr., I think. You are on
2 deck, sir.
3 Are you an intervenor in the case?
4 MS. CALES: No.
5 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. If you please
6 raise your right hand.
7 WHEREUPON,
8 NANNETTE CALES,
9 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
10 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
11 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
12 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell
13 your name for the record.
14 THE WITNESS: My name is Nannette
15 Cales, N-A-N-N-E-T-T-E C-A-L-E-S. My address is 540
16 Wooster Road, Mount Vernon, Ohio. And I live in
17 Monroe Township.
18 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
19 work in the project area?
20 THE WITNESS: I do not.
21 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
22 DIRECT STATEMENT
23 THE WITNESS: As I know that I do not
24 live or work directly in the project area, I do live
25 in Mount Vernon. And I was born and raised in the

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1 project area. My parents still live in the project
2 area. I am the future of their property in the
3 project area.
4 I am directly affected when something
5 directly affects my elderly parents and my brother and
6 my family. My parents and some of my extended family
7 live in Miller Township. I will always with what I
8 believe is best for them.
9 I've heard many people talk tonight
10 about property rights. What about the property rights
11 of the neighbors? What about the property rights of
12 the people that are not having the solar panels but
13 their properties are going to be -- values are going
14 to go down?
15 As a third generation to that property,
16 I oppose Frasier Solar project. Thank you.
17 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
18 Any questions from counsel?
19 Thank you for your testimony.
20 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
21 JUDGE HICKS: Up next is Mr. Baker -- I
22 see coming up -- and next on the list would be Pam
23 Phillips.
24 Mr. Baker, are you an intervenor in the
25 case?

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1 MR. BAKER: Pardon?
2 JUDGE HICKS: Are you an intervenor in
3 the case?
4 MR. BAKER: No.
5 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
6 right hand.
7 WHEREUPON,
8 DANIEL C. BAKER SR.,
9 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
10 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
11 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
12 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
13 spell your name for the record.
14 THE WITNESS: Daniel C. Baker,
15 D-A-N-I-E-L B-A-K-E-R Sr.
16 JUDGE HICKS: And could you please
17 provide your address including township?
18 THE WITNESS: 13630 Miller Road, Mount
19 Vernon. Yeah, Miler.
20 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
21 work in the project area?
22 THE WITNESS: Live. I'm retired, so --
23 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
24 with your testimony.
25 //

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1 DIRECT STATEMENT
2 THE WITNESS: Okay. I am in opposition
3 to the solar. Simple reason that I just don't trust
4 it. It's -- from what I've read and heard, it's still
5 too young to go with, as far as I'm concerned.
6 I have been approached and they offered
7 me the -- what'll they call it -- the friends or
8 whatever. And I turned them down. And that's all I
9 got. Thank you.
10 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
11 counsel?
12 Thank you for your testimony.
13 Pam Phillips?
14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She went home.
15 JUDGE HICKS: Okay.
16 MR. PHILLIPS: It's her birthday.
17 JUDGE HICKS: I'm going to guess you're
18 Bob Phillips?
19 MR. PHILLIPS: That'd be a true
20 statement.
21 JUDGE HICKS: Next on the list after
22 Mr. Phillips is David --
23 MR. PHILLIPS: Stuller.
24 JUDGE HICKS: -- Stuller.
25 MR. PHILLIPS: But anyway, Bob

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1 Phillips --
2 JUDGE HICKS: Let me just do the --
3 you're not an intervenor in the case?
4 MR. PHILLIPS: That'd be a true
5 statement.
6 JUDGE HICKS: Okay.
7 WHEREUPON,
8 BOB PHILLIPS,
9 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
10 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
11 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
12 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. For the court
13 reporter, please --
14 THE WITNESS: Bob Phillips, B-O-B
15 P-H-I-L-L-I-P-S. Live at 11839 Banning Road, Clinton
16 Township, which part of the project is in.
17 DIRECT STATEMENT
18 THE WITNESS: I'm the one that pulled
19 myself off the Ohio Power Siting Board because I am
20 totally against this project. It's kind of like the
21 old -- in my opinion. We have a long ways to go.
22 They improve the panels all the time.
23 Here we are going to through these things everywhere
24 that we think we know everything about, of course
25 until just like they put a car on the road and the

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1 brakes don't work and kills somebody.
2 So in my opinion, a lot of these things
3 are coming from overseas. We're relying on huge, huge
4 volumes of these things that are not getting here, you
5 know -- our ports are bad. We even had a big mishap,
6 what, out in Massachusetts or wherever that bridge
7 fell.
8 But all that stuff, we're going to rely
9 on that for our energy instead of our local -- which
10 everybody is calling, you know, the wells and the oils
11 and the gases that we have right underneath this
12 little county here of Knox County.
13 And we're going to go supply solar to
14 the big cities because we've promised big companies
15 that are coming in here that we're going to give them
16 this green energy and great stuff for them.
17 So with that being said, the supply
18 side of this whole castle going to crumble someday
19 when we're going to rely a high percentage of our
20 energy from that source. And we're pushing the coal
21 and the gas and everything off the planet.
22 It's weird to, you know -- China is
23 producing a coal plant every -- every week, and we're
24 getting rid of them. It's kind of weird. And they're
25 the ones producing the glass panels from that coal to

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1 build for us here.
2 And we're creating a great green energy
3 world that way. Because they're putting more in the
4 atmosphere and we're trying to take it out.
5 So that doesn't work for me 'cause it's
6 a whole world. It isn't just the United States or
7 Knox County. So we're letting them just destroy the
8 Earth over there while we're thinking we're saving it
9 here. And that just doesn't work. That doesn't make
10 sense.
11 And the concept of the other topic I'd
12 like to touch is property rights. Yeah. Property
13 rights are great till we put in zoning, till we don't
14 let chickens run down up throughout the streets in
15 Mount Vernon.
16 Why don't we have pigs running up and
17 down the street? Because we have zoning. We have
18 neighbors that say hey, we don't like pigs running up
19 and down the street. So we can't have our pigs in our
20 street.
21 So it's the same thing out in the
22 counties, in the townships. Make it where it's
23 neighbor-friendly. If you're going to wipe out your
24 neighbors, you've lost your friends. Sorry, but
25 that's what'll happen.

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1 And it'll happen over and over. And
2 it's creating a mini war and all these townships --
3 and you guys are letting it happen.
4 So it'd been easy if we were all aware
5 of it four years ago. For some reason we aren't
6 allowed to know 'cause it's competitive market, you
7 know, this energy company and this company, we can't
8 let them know we're coming into this county.
9 Kind of BS kind of a program. But
10 that's what the whole concept is, keeping it all
11 hushed up. No, it's so the citizens don't know that
12 they're surrounding these people.
13 So sorry for that. But that's what I
14 have to say. I been here all my life. My dad's
15 nickname was Sheepy, so we had 500 ewes when he was a
16 little kid. So we know sheep. We know cows. I grew
17 up smelling like cow shit or cow manure. So that's my
18 world. So thank you.
19 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
20 counsel?
21 Thank you for your testimony.
22 On deck is Brian Wallace.
23 Mr. Stuller?
24 MR. STULLER: Yes?
25 JUDGE HICKS: Are you an intervenor in

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1 the case?

2 MR. STULLER: I am not.

3 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your

4 right hand.

5 WHEREUPON,

6 DAVID STULLER,

7 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn

8 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

9 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

10 JUDGE HICKS: Please state and spell

11 your name for the record.

12 THE WITNESS: My name is David Stuller,

13 D-A-V-I-D S-T-U-L-L-E-R. I live at 1415 Culbertson

14 Drive, Mount Vernon, Ohio. The part of Mount Vernon

15 I'm in is Pleasant Township.

16 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or

17 work in the project area?

18 THE WITNESS: Yes.

19 JUDGE HICKS: Please go ahead.

20 DIRECT STATEMENT

21 THE WITNESS: So I am the city

22 treasurer of Mount Vernon. In my role as treasurer, I

23 oversee the tax department, which collects income tax

24 from those who live and work in Mount Vernon and also

25 from business profits for those operating in Mount

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1 Vernon. Income tax receipts account for nearly half

2 of the city's annual budget.

3 I fully support resolution 2024-34,

4 passed recently by Mount Vernon City Council, opposing

5 industrial solar development in Mount Vernon.

6 126 acres of land located on Sharp Road

7 are within the city limits and are part of the Frasier

8 Solar project. This land was annexed into the city

9 without about 350 additional acres.

10 Planning for the future, there was a

11 mixture of zoning applied to this ground. There were

12 some acres that were general business, which increased

13 the size of the industrial park. There was some

14 wetlands to protect the environment. There was also

15 planned neighborhood development for housing which

16 comes along with all the business growth.

17 This land that I'm speaking of was the

18 planned neighborhood development. So the current --

19 and it is currently being farmed. But make no

20 mistake, it is not farmland.

21 The resolution passed by county

22 commissioners allowed for solar development on

23 unincorporated land in Knox County on a case-by-case

24 basis. This is clearly not unincorporated. So the

25 resolution and the reason we are here today does not

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1 apply to this land.

2 If industrial solar is permitted on

3 this land, Mount Vernon stands to lose revenue for the

4 next forty-plus years, revenue that is crucial to the

5 long-term vitality of this city. The payments in lieu

6 of taxes pilot amount to very little as these payments

7 bypass the city and go directly to the county.

8 It is my duty as city treasurer to act

9 in the best interest of the citizens of Mount Vernon

10 because that is why they elected me.

11 So on behalf of them and for the

12 continued vitality of Mount Vernon, I respectfully

13 request this site be disallowed for solar development.

14 Let's keep this land as it was originally planned.

15 Thank you for your time.

16 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.

17 Any from questions from counsel?

18 Mr. Settineri?

19 CROSS-EXAMINATION

20 BY MR. SETTINERI:

21 Q Good evening, sir.

22 A Good evening.

23 Q You made a comment -- I wrote it down, I

24 think. You talked about 126 acres on Sharp Road that

25 are currently being farmed.

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1 A Yeah. Yes, it is.

2 Q You said "but make no mistake; it's not

3 farmland."

4 A It is not farmland.

5 Q Why did you say that?

6 A Because it's zoned planned development --

7 planned neighborhood development.

8 Q Is it privately owned land currently?

9 A It is.

10 Q Does the city of Mount Vernon own that land?

11 A But the city of Mount Vernon controls it

12 through their zoning. It is annexed into the city; it

13 is part of the city.

14 Q But the city doesn't own that land, does it?

15 A No.

16 Q Private landowner does. And so you support

17 neighborhood development for the city; is that

18 correct?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Okay. And you'd agree then that --

21 A Because if you don't -- if you don't do it

22 here, it's going to be -- housing is coming, whether

23 it's here, whether it's someplace else. It's coming.

24 So if it's not here, this land is going to

25 sit within the city of Mount Vernon. We have 126

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1 acres in the city of Mount Vernon with no revenue to
2 the city for 40-plus years. And then what happens
3 after 40 years? What happens after 40 years?
4 Q You read -- did you read the staff report
5 and recommendation and conditions?
6 A Why would I do that?
7 Q I have to --
8 THE REPORTER: Excuse me. Excuse me.
9 Can you wait until they stop clapping?
10 THE WITNESS: It's a -- it's a moot
11 point. It's a moot point.
12 BY MR. SETTINERI:
13 Q I just have to ask --
14 A This land is zoned planned neighborhood
15 development. It's not agricultural. And it should
16 not be solar.
17 Q You said you didn't read it, and you asked
18 why should you. You're a public official; is that
19 correct?
20 A I am.
21 Q You're the city treasurer?
22 A Yes.
23 Q You also talked about the pilot. Do you
24 know that under the pilot the Mount Vernon city
25 schools are to receive, annually, over \$400,000 a

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1 year?
2 A Yeah. And you know that's not inflation
3 adjusted. It's flat for 40 years. And does not
4 increase, which this has the opportunity to increase.
5 And if it was developed as it was zoned, the schools
6 would have opportunity for more tax as well as the
7 city of Mount Vernon.
8 Q And so under your view, taking that farmland
9 today into residential would ensure that land doesn't
10 go back to farmland ever; correct?
11 A Neither do two- and five-acre parcels in the
12 country for one house.
13 Q You mentioned that I think that your role is
14 to do what's best for the citizens of Mount Vernon;
15 correct?
16 A Yes.
17 Q And without the project that --
18 A So you think -- you think having -- you
19 think --
20 JUDGE HICKS: Sir. Sir, let him finish
21 his question. And he is also the one asking the
22 questions.
23 THE WITNESS: All right.
24 BY MR. SETTINERI:
25 Q Let me ask this. You, in your role as city

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1 treasurer, want to do what's best for the citizens of
2 Mount Vernon; correct?
3 A I answered that.
4 Q And with the project, the Mount Vernon city
5 schools would get over, fact, I think, an estimated
6 488,000 a year; correct?
7 A We've covered this. Didn't we cover this?
8 We covered this.
9 Q I'm asking --
10 JUDGE HICKS: He did answer the
11 question.
12 But also, you need to let Mr. Settineri
13 finish his questions before you answer. Okay?
14 THE WITNESS: I thought he was
15 finished.
16 BY MR. SETTINERI:
17 Q You agree with the project that there would
18 be, I have here, 480,000 annually that would not
19 increase with inflation; correct?
20 A Correct.
21 Q And without the project, there would be no
22 488,000 a year for the schools; correct?
23 A It could be more.
24 Q Without the project --
25 A It could be more.

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1 Q And that would be if you converted all of
2 the land to residential subdivisions?
3 A Right.
4 MR. SETTINERI: No further questions.
5 Thank you.
6 CROSS-EXAMINATION
7 BY MR. ELKIN:
8 Q Just a couple additional questions.
9 Resolution 2024-31 from Mount Vernon, does that apply
10 to the 126 acres that you were just discussing?
11 A Yes.
12 Q And that resolution discusses preservation
13 of agricultural land and reduction of agricultural
14 land; is that correct?
15 A That was part of the broader -- it covered -
16 - in addition to this, it covered the whole Knox
17 County. So in addition, that's what that was about.
18 Q Anywhere in the resolution, does it discuss
19 preserving land for planned residential development?
20 A I don't believe so.
21 Q Nowhere in the resolution?
22 A But it -- but it's zoned that.
23 Q Thank you.
24 A It doesn't need to say that because it's
25 zoned already. That planning happened a long time

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1 ago. Bringing it into the city, having industrial
 2 land, having planned neighborhood development, it was
 3 all part of a larger plan. And this is -- this is the
 4 end of that plan.
 5 MR. ELKIN: Thank you. No further
 6 questions.
 7 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 8 Thank you for your testimony.
 9 Brian Wallace. And on deck is Audrey
 10 Cullen.
 11 MR. WALLACE: Hello. Like you said,
 12 Brian Wallace here. B-R-I-A-N W-A-L-L-A-C-E.
 13 JUDGE HICKS: Just need to swear you
 14 in. And I confirm you are not an intervenor?
 15 MR. WALLACE: No.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 17 right hand.
 18 WHEREUPON,
 19 BRIAN WALLACE,
 20 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 21 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 22 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 23 JUDGE HICKS: You may have just started
 24 it, but go ahead and provide your name and spell it
 25 for the court reporter.

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1 THE WITNESS: Sure. Brian Wallace,
 2 B-R-I-A-N W-A-L-L-A-C-E. 11920 Fred Amity Road,
 3 F-R-E-D A-M-I-T-Y, Fredericktown, Morris Township.
 4 And I'm not at the site.
 5 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 6 DIRECT STATEMENT
 7 THE WITNESS: So I know -- in I think
 8 roughly 1970 is when I kind of -- I can think back --
 9 I was born in 1981. However, I know we've always
 10 heard about -- think the big talk of scientists and
 11 politicians was, there's going to be an ice age by the
 12 year 2000.
 13 1976, global cooling was going to cause
 14 a world war by the year 2000. 1989, the global
 15 warming and the rising levels was going to wipe our
 16 entire nation off the map.
 17 1999, the glaciers are going to be gone
 18 in ten years. 2008, arctic is going to be ice-free by
 19 the year 2013. And it goes on and on.
 20 What we all just lived through, you
 21 know -- well, we can say that, you know, science and
 22 politicians, they're not -- they haven't been proven
 23 to be reliable. And we all just lived through a big
 24 fiasco, a worldwide one, all in the name of science.
 25 So -- and it's -- all the credit and

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1 all the authorities given to, you know, our trusted
 2 agencies -- so I know I've heard some of the people
 3 say it here tonight.
 4 You know, we have, you know, smoking --
 5 the government, we said it was great, you know, kids
 6 have smoking, kids on planes, doctors and it was all
 7 okay. Just one thing, you know.
 8 But this has not been proven. We don't
 9 the long-term effects from this industrial solar. So
 10 I'm all about property rights. You know, we the
 11 people. I'm all about being a sovereign nation and,
 12 you know, being able to make my own choices, my own
 13 decision as a, you know, free from the government
 14 interference or intervention.
 15 But when I got to looking into this, I
 16 mean -- and it's been said here many times -- a lot of
 17 folks that -- what about the property rights, you
 18 know, for the persons living next to an adjacent farm?
 19 So and we can learn from -- there's a
 20 big farm in Michigan. Just there's a lot of case
 21 studies that we can go look at right now, your own
 22 town or own city or own state.
 23 But one I'm speaking of is in Michigan
 24 -- roughly five to seven hundred acres. The township
 25 trustees are going through and they're doing a tour

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1 and another township trustee from Illinois is coming
 2 in to take a look at it. And it's just completely
 3 devastated the land. They're in absolute -- they're
 4 just wishing they didn't do it to the landowners.
 5 And a lot of people have talked about
 6 the sound. And I want to play the sound real quick
 7 while I'm talking of these inverters that are going to
 8 be heard up to a mile away. (Plays audio.)
 9 So that's the inverter. This -- that's
 10 the constant nonstop sound that people are -- locust
 11 sound, whatever, you know, you may describe it as. It
 12 certainly isn't peace and quiet. It's not the sound
 13 of nature that God created.
 14 You know, so I have all this things
 15 that are -- disturb me, you know, about the land, the
 16 wildlife, you know. So at that farm I was talking
 17 about in Michigan, what they do is they take a skid
 18 steer and they bulldoze all the topsoil so it takes
 19 all the agricultural value away from it.
 20 And then they take these, like, 4-foot
 21 wide augurs and drill down 10 feet down into the
 22 ground, destroying all the drain tile, completely
 23 destroying the, you know, the -- so the -- it destroys
 24 the agricultural value.
 25 And it's on a level ground so it

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1 retains water. The neighboring properties do as well.
 2 So here in Knox County we have a lot
 3 of, you know, valleys and inclines and whatnot, so the
 4 low-lying areas are just going to retain it on top of,
 5 you know, all the issues we've been having just
 6 recently with some high water accumulation from the
 7 storms.
 8 But anyhow, I did some canvassing,
 9 going around the neighborhoods because as you know,
 10 everyone knows and has brought this up. The big topic
 11 for local politics, which I didn't know anything about
 12 -- I don't if any -- other knew about it.
 13 But out of 150 people I spoke to
 14 personally -- it -- maybe that's just a rough number,
 15 three of those people were for this. So the
 16 resounding majority of people know, you know, it's
 17 been proven like everyone has already said, you know.
 18 This is from our -- what the people
 19 want here. And I just think that if the county, the
 20 city, you know, everyone is just absolutely against
 21 it, I don't think that we should be destroying the
 22 planet just to save it.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Wallace.
 24 Any questions from counsel?
 25 //

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1 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 2 BY MR. EISENSEN:
 3 Q So you testified that you're concerned about
 4 impacts to drainage tile; is that correct?
 5 A That's one of them. Yeah.
 6 Q Are you aware of any measures that the
 7 applicant has proposed to take care of drainage tile?
 8 A What applicant? This one?
 9 Q Yeah, the developer.
 10 A No.
 11 Q So you haven't read the staff report where
 12 it describes that the applicant has --
 13 A No.
 14 Q So --
 15 A There's two or three pages I've read. I
 16 downloaded it. I briefly scrolled through it.
 17 Nothing of interest to me because the long-term
 18 studies haven't been conducted. That's the concern.
 19 And I don't want to be Knox County to be the
 20 test pilot, you know, 40 years late: why? It's not a
 21 good idea for remaining country.
 22 Q So you're not aware that the applicant has
 23 committed to restoring all the damaged drainage tiles?
 24 A I really don't care what they've decided.
 25 There's no -- there's no proven data. I don't care

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1 about a government report. I want to see it with my
 2 own eyes. I want people generations to live through
 3 and see it, that it's good.
 4 Q You also referred to a case study in
 5 Michigan where all the topsoil is bulldozed; is that
 6 right?
 7 A Yes, sir.
 8 Q Yeah. And are you aware of any measures
 9 that the developer here has proposed to protect soil?
 10 A Don't care.
 11 Q Yeah. So you're not aware that the
 12 developer is planning to separate the topsoil from the
 13 subsoil during construction --
 14 A No, this is an agriculture county. And
 15 solar farming is not farming. Solar farming is not
 16 farming.
 17 Q And you're not aware of any recommendation
 18 to limit the amount of grading to --
 19 A I don't care. It doesn't bother me. No.
 20 The long-term improvement studies of regenerations is
 21 what I care about.
 22 MR. EISENSEN: All right. Thank you.
 23 THE WITNESS: And I hope the Ohio
 24 Power -- OPSB takes that in consideration, please.
 25 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.

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1 Up next is Audrey Cullen.
 2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not here.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Seth Ring?
 4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.
 5 JUDGE HICKS: Not here?
 6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Think I'm next.
 7 JUDGE HICKS: Isabel Conner?
 8 Eric Holdener?
 9 And on deck would be Roberta Gardner.
 10 Mr. Holdener, are you an intervenor in
 11 the case?
 12 MR. HOLDENER: No, I am not.
 13 JUDGE HICKS: Could you please raise
 14 your right hand.
 15 WHEREUPON,
 16 ERIC HOLDENER,
 17 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 18 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 19 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 20 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 21 spell your name for the record.
 22 THE WITNESS: My name is Eric Holdener,
 23 E-R-I-C H-O-L-D-E-N-E-R.
 24 JUDGE HICKS: And your address
 25 including any township.

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1 THE WITNESS: 202 East Wiggins Street
 2 in Gambier, which is College Township.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
 4 work in the project area?
 5 THE WITNESS: No, but I hope to take a
 6 field trip there one day.
 7 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 8 with your testimony.
 9 DIRECT TESTIMONY
 10 THE WITNESS: Okay. So at the risk of
 11 causing some laughter in the room, I'm going to say
 12 that I also help teach that solar power class at
 13 Kenyon College.
 14 And we take a lot of field trips in
 15 that course, mostly to residential solar sites. We
 16 primarily talk to our students about residential
 17 installations. But one of the benefits of solar power
 18 is that it's really scalable.
 19 With the growth of solar in and around
 20 Knox County, we have also started taking our students
 21 out to see several commercial solar farms including
 22 one very memorable visit to a -- it was a little over
 23 3 megawatts, I believe -- installation down at Denison
 24 University.
 25 And I'm going to tell you a little bit

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1 about it because it speaks to some of the
 2 misinformation that's been just spoken about just two
 3 minutes ago.
 4 We had a guided tour of that facility.
 5 It was a beautiful, warm, sunny, spring afternoon, not
 6 at all like today. Our guide was telling us about the
 7 facility and the, you know, the panels and the arrays.
 8 And he also told us about the process that Denison had
 9 gone through to get the facility built.
 10 The neighbors were not happy. And they
 11 were worried, primarily, about the noise that the
 12 tracking motors and the inverters would make. And we
 13 were about -- well, we could have reached out and
 14 touched the inverters. So we were right there. And
 15 they made a noise that was inconsequential.
 16 And I don't know what the gentleman
 17 just played on his phone, but that was not any
 18 inverter that I've ever listened to in my life. Now,
 19 granted, I haven't been to all the inverters on the
 20 planet, but that was -- you know, we walked 10 feet
 21 away from the inverter that day, and you didn't hear a
 22 darn thing.
 23 Now we were also looking at the arrays,
 24 and they have tracking motors. And, you know, we were
 25 right there watching them and they moved. We couldn't

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1 hear a darn thing. The sound of the bees and the, you
 2 know, the chirping of the crickets was -- that's all
 3 we heard.
 4 So again, I can't speak to every darn
 5 solar facility on the planet, but if you're a mile
 6 away from these inverters, I doubt if you're going to
 7 be, you know, losing any sleep.
 8 Okay. That's really about all I want
 9 to say. I mean, I could go on about other
 10 misinformation. But I'm just going to leave it at
 11 that. I'm for Frasier Solar. And I'm for the
 12 economical and clean and quiet energy that it will
 13 bring the citizens of Knox County.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 15 Any questions from counsel?
 16 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 17 BY MR. WIEGEL:
 18 Q Good evening. Just to clarify a couple of
 19 points that I asked your colleague a little earlier,
 20 did you as a teacher encourage any of your students to
 21 file public comments in this case?
 22 A No, we did not.
 23 Q And there was no incentive to either way,
 24 pro or against, you know, they get involved with the
 25 process?

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1 A We were very evenhanded. We had people from
 2 Preserve Knox County come and talk to our students for
 3 about an hour. And we visited Craig Adair and the
 4 Open Roads people and heard about the same amount of
 5 time from them.
 6 Q You mentioned you've taken some field trips
 7 to solar installations.
 8 A Correct.
 9 Q What is the largest installation you
 10 visited?
 11 A It would be that one down at Denison, so
 12 far.
 13 Q Denison. And how many solar panels was
 14 that?
 15 A Oh, I don't know. It's -- it's about --
 16 again, I think it's about 3 megawatts total. The site
 17 we were at was probably a little over 2.
 18 Q Okay. So you haven't been to any industrial
 19 solar installations in Ohio on the scale similar to
 20 Frasier?
 21 A No, but I did some quick math earlier today
 22 with one of the maps that were handed out. And if
 23 it's 120 megawatts, and I think I counted up 32
 24 inverters, that's three and a half or so megawatts per
 25 inverter. So roughly comparable.

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1 And that inverter that we were at was, you
 2 know, older technology. So if it was going to be
 3 anything, it'd probably be louder than what they're
 4 making these days.
 5 MR. WIEGEL: Thank you.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Mr. Van Kley?
 7 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 8 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 9 Q So there was one inverter in that whole
 10 project?
 11 A Yeah, it was, you know, about 12/15 feet
 12 long, I believe.
 13 Q Twelve to fifteen long. Do you know what
 14 the size of the inverters are that are planned for
 15 Frasier?
 16 A No, I don't. But I -- like I said, I just
 17 did that quick calculation. And I'm -- would assume
 18 it's roughly about the same size as the one we were
 19 standing next to.
 20 Q Do you how many inverters are going to be
 21 put in at Frasier?
 22 A If you count up the little dots on the map,
 23 it came out to be, I think, 32.
 24 Q Do 32 inverters make more noise than one
 25 inverter, you think?

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1 A Oh, I bet they do if you stack them up on
 2 top of each other, they'd probably make a hell of a
 3 lot of noise. But if they're spread out like they're
 4 going to be, I don't think it's going to be a problem.
 5 Q I take it from your answer to my colleague's
 6 questions that you've never gone out to the Hillcrest
 7 facility to hear what you could hear there.
 8 A No, I haven't. But I have decided that I'm
 9 going to do that before the next meeting. And if I've
 10 changed my mind, I'll stand up and let you know about
 11 it.
 12 Q And how about any of the Hardin solar
 13 facilities that have been put in? Have you gone out
 14 and listened to those?
 15 A No, I have not.
 16 Q Have you gone out and listened to any of the
 17 Madison County facilities that have been built?
 18 A No, I have not.
 19 MR. VAN KLEY: Okay. Thank you.
 20 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you for your
 21 testimony.
 22 Up next is Roberta Gardener.
 23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She's not here.
 24 She left.
 25 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Heidi Hulse?

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1 Sorry if I mispronounced that.
 2 MS. HULSE: No, it's Hulse. That's
 3 right.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: And next on the list
 5 would be Mark Hulse.
 6 You're not an intervenor in the case?
 7 MS. HULSE: No.
 8 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Could you please
 9 raise your right hand.
 10 WHEREUPON,
 11 HEIDI HULSE,
 12 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 13 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 14 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 16 spell your name for the record.
 17 THE WITNESS: It's Heidi Hulse,
 18 H-E-I-D-I H-U-L-S-E.
 19 JUDGE HICKS: And your address
 20 including any township.
 21 THE WITNESS: It's 14582 Montgomery
 22 Road, Fredericktown, Ohio. And it is Morris Township.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And do you live or
 24 work in the project area?
 25 THE WITNESS: No.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 2 DIRECT STATEMENT
 3 THE WITNESS: As I said, my name is
 4 Heidi Hulse. My husband and I own a solar company
 5 here in Knox County. We do only residential and small
 6 commercial projects. I support this Frasier Solar
 7 project.
 8 As a solar company, we do not install
 9 industrial-scale solar. And business-wise, we are not
 10 involved with this project in any way, shape, or form.
 11 I do support the freedom of property rights for
 12 landowners.
 13 And I do have concerns about the
 14 reliability of our grids, as our community population
 15 is increasing as we have the new development of Intel
 16 coming near us and within driving range from our
 17 community.
 18 We also have the issue of we have less
 19 and less power plants in the state of Ohio now, which
 20 can become an issue, and older plants on top of that
 21 too.
 22 Since our business knowledge about
 23 solar, I've received an unbelievable amount of calls
 24 and questions from customers, friends, and family, and
 25 other people in the community, wanting to know

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1 information about solar.
2 Being in that field, and that's our
3 profession, I was able to be able to provide a lot of
4 that information. Most of those people were open for
5 educated information, which has been very helpful.
6 And on that side, we were able to
7 explain to them what panels, like -- you know, many of
8 them had heard a lot of the misinformation and did not
9 understand all this type of information.
10 They also thought that all the farmland
11 was being used. And I had to explain to them that
12 it's a small portion of the farmland in Knox County,
13 not all the farmland. They understood more the
14 details on that and that it was a low percentage.
15 We also addressed some of the issues
16 that we have other things going on in our county like
17 farmland that's being used -- that's actually being
18 paid not to be farmed -- where we're concerned about
19 taking a portion of farmland and using it for solar
20 that can be productive but yet in the end, we're also
21 paying part of areas from the federal government to
22 not farm.
23 And these farms being set and being
24 idle in our community.
25 So after talking to a lot of these

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1 people, they learned that there was really no reason
2 or really justifiable reason that they can actually,
3 you know, be against solar without a personal gain,
4 with no real merit.
5 We also hear a lot that solar does not
6 work in Ohio, which is completely a false statement.
7 As the owner of a solar company, let me tell you it
8 does work in Ohio. My personal electric bill this
9 month was negative 17 dollars. That's working.
10 Solar panels do not need hot weather to
11 work. They actually thrive in 50-to-70-degree
12 weather, which we have a lot of here in Ohio. We have
13 seen -- March has been an unbelievably high month for
14 us.
15 February was great too. Most think
16 February does not produce anything. February is
17 actually a very good month for us the last couple
18 years.
19 And I'm open to discussion further on
20 that if anyone would like to see any kind of
21 monitoring system so you can actually see what the
22 panels do.
23 Our monitoring system actually shows
24 every panel so that way you can kind of see what
25 panels do in different weather, different clouds, and

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1 different things like that, which is great information
2 for knowing that solar actually does function and work
3 well in Ohio.
4 And we understand that people --
5 sometimes people will be at events and people will
6 come up to us and say solar doesn't work. They hear
7 misinformation. And sometimes those people actually
8 were sold solar that didn't work.
9 And it usually was from a company that
10 wasn't reputable. And they went through and sold some
11 of those kind of things.
12 Where with this project, there's bonds.
13 And, you know, with residential solar, there's no
14 bonds to protect those people. So solar has been kind
15 of given a bad rap just because of, you know, systems
16 like that not working.
17 We get the calls daily trying -- for
18 people wanting us to fix those kind of systems. And
19 many of them are just really, really a mess.
20 But with you guys being the board and,
21 you know, supporting this kind of project and making
22 sure everything is in line with what it needs to be,
23 it's a huge help with that. So we don't have the same
24 kind of worries that those residential customers would
25 have.

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1 And also, I've watched in disbelief as
2 the community just went through an election with two
3 representatives for county commissioner seats that
4 were open.
5 And just getting the emails and the
6 social media posts and all those things and mailers
7 and newspapers and everything, and I was just amazed
8 at the lies and the misinformation.
9 Being a solar company, I was just like,
10 I cannot believe this. And that's what sparked a lot
11 of the phone calls to us and things like that. And as
12 I was going through those with different customers, it
13 was just like unbelievable that we could actually look
14 at that.
15 And it was -- it was crazy. Many, many
16 lies. And it got so deep it actually hit other areas.
17 It hit customers in Cleveland. People from all over
18 were calling us.
19 It became a liberal/conservative battle
20 at that point. So it kind of turned one of these
21 things that if you believed in solar, you were no
22 longer a conservative. You had to be liberal to
23 believe in solar. I don't know how that happened in
24 our county, but it hit bigtime.
25 And it was really, really unfortunate

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1 because we need both. We need electric and gas, not
 2 just --
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Ms. Hulse, we've hit your
 4 five minutes. Thank you.
 5 THE WITNESS: Yeah. Thank you.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
 7 counsel?
 8 Mr. Van Kley?
 9 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 10 BY MR. VAN KLEY:
 11 Q Does your company install panels?
 12 A We do residential and small commercial.
 13 Q What's the largest project that you've ever
 14 installed?
 15 A Installed? We have been -- we've installed
 16 a 90-panel system, which would be a -- 'cause we do
 17 residential. Electric companies only let you install
 18 a 25-case system. So 25-case system. A small
 19 commercial job we did is about a 30-case system.
 20 Q So how many solar panels approximately with
 21 the largest project you've ever done?
 22 A Ninety.
 23 Q Ninety?
 24 A Yeah.
 25 Q Okay. And are those the same size as the

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1 industrial panels that are going to be put --
 2 A They're a little smaller. Yeah. We do 430
 3 panels, and I think most of those are five or six
 4 hundred. So -- kilowatts. Yeah. So little smaller
 5 scale, but the same -- the same, you know, technology
 6 overall.
 7 Q Okay. Thank you.
 8 A Yeah. Thanks.
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you for --
 10 Mr. Settineri?
 11 MR. SETTINERI: I think this is worth
 12 it for the board to hear. I do have a question for
 13 this witness. I'll ask the question.
 14 JUDGE HICKS: All right. I'm warning
 15 you with friendly cross now.
 16 CROSS-EXAMINATION
 17 BY MR. SETTINERI:
 18 Q I will say you mentioned a lot of
 19 misinformation with your background. What kind of
 20 misinformation have you seen that was disseminated?
 21 MR. VAN KLEY: Objection.
 22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Objection.
 23 MR. SETTINERI: I think it's worth it
 24 for the board to hear this.
 25 JUDGE HICKS: She's already testified

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1 as to misinformation.
 2 Thank you for your testimony.
 3 Up next is Mark Hulse. And on deck
 4 would be Bob Marsell.
 5 MR. HULSE: My name is Mark Hulse.
 6 JUDGE HICKS: Are you an intervenor in
 7 the case?
 8 MR. HULSE: No, I'm not.
 9 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please raise your
 10 right hand.
 11 WHEREUPON,
 12 MARK HULSE,
 13 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 14 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 15 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please state and
 17 spell your name for the record.
 18 THE WITNESS: Mark Hulse, M-A-R-K
 19 H-U-L-S-E.
 20 JUDGE HICKS: And your address
 21 including township?
 22 THE WITNESS: 14582 Montgomery Road,
 23 Fredericktown, Ohio.
 24 JUDGE HICKS: And do you live or work
 25 in the project area?

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1 THE WITNESS: I do not.
 2 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead.
 3 DIRECT STATEMENT
 4 THE WITNESS: That was my wife that was
 5 just up here. Like she said, we have a small solar
 6 company in Fredericktown. And just a couple more
 7 points I wanted to say that she already had spoken
 8 about was, that -- the main thing is that solar
 9 doesn't work in Ohio.
 10 You know, we have close to 200
 11 customers that probably, we have not had one that's --
 12 has not got what we've sold them or says that it
 13 doesn't work. Like she said, our electric bill was
 14 negative 17 this month.
 15 We've had several customers call this
 16 month and say we couldn't believe we have a dollar
 17 twenty electric bill. Or I think the most I've heard
 18 so far is like six bucks. But it definitely does work
 19 if you size it right and you do it right.
 20 But getting to why they work is, the
 21 solar panels today are really manufactured well. A
 22 lot of the concerns was for the hail damage for our
 23 area.
 24 They put -- they put solar panels
 25 through a lot of different stress test, and they

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1 actually shoot -- a lot of companies shoot, actually,
 2 ice cannons at the panels to try to hit them to see
 3 how much, you know, speed or, you know, how much
 4 volume it takes to actually crack them.
 5 In six years that we've been doing
 6 solar, I think we've had one panel bust because a
 7 customer ran into it with a lawnmower. So, I mean,
 8 they're really durable.
 9 The other point I was going to mention
 10 was -- trying to think. Yeah. I can't remember.
 11 That's it.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Any questions from
 13 counsel?
 14 Thank you for your testimony.
 15 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: Up next is Bob Marsell.
 17 Next on the list is Patti Dice.
 18 Who, correct me, Mr. Van Kley, I think
 19 is an intervenor.
 20 She will be added to the list of those
 21 to circle back to. And so on deck would be Tom
 22 Whitson.
 23 Mr. Marsell, are you an intervenor in
 24 the case?
 25 MR. MARSELL: No.

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1 JUDGE HICKS: All right. Please raise
 2 your right hand.
 3 WHEREUPON,
 4 BOB MARSELL,
 5 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 6 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 7 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 8 JUDGE HICKS: All right. Please state
 9 and spell your name for the record.
 10 THE WITNESS: Bob Marsell, B-O-B
 11 M-A-R-S-E-L-L. Monroe Township, 15310 Carson Road.
 12 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you. And do you
 13 live or work in the project area?
 14 THE WITNESS: I work in Clinton
 15 Township. Yes.
 16 JUDGE HICKS: All right. Please go
 17 ahead.
 18 DIRECT STATEMENT
 19 THE WITNESS: I just want to thank you
 20 for listening to the community. We're all kind of out
 21 of our comfort zone. We're not professional speakers
 22 out here. Just speaking from our heart and what we
 23 think is going to be right for our community.
 24 I personally do not want industrial
 25 solar in Knox County. I live in Monroe Township, and

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1 it's the agricultural township. And I believe just
 2 because you put sheep underneath an industrial solar
 3 panel, doesn't make it industrial -- or doesn't make
 4 it agriculture.
 5 And the recent election that we did
 6 have here, I believe that we came out in a strong
 7 force and showed what the people of Mount Vernon or
 8 Knox County do not want industrial solar.
 9 Some of my concerns are, basically, the
 10 grading and the natural waterways. We have a lot of
 11 erosion that goes around. And when they take that
 12 topsoil off, are the natural waterways getting
 13 affected? See, I'm not real -- I'm not real sure
 14 about these things.
 15 Being as it kind of came in the back
 16 door, we didn't have a whole lot of time to study
 17 about solar and big industrial solar areas. So we're
 18 all kind of caught off guard as just common folk, you
 19 know.
 20 We're -- I do hear some of the Gambier,
 21 Kenyon people that are all educated. But you're
 22 talking to farmers. You're talking to people that
 23 just -- I'm a parts manager. I have no idea about
 24 industrial solar.
 25 Would have been nice to have a little

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1 bit of headway before all this stuff just kind of got,
 2 really, sprung on us, in my opinion.
 3 I think our commissioners that were on
 4 board -- one of them is my friend, one of them I went
 5 to school with -- kind of stabbed us a little bit in
 6 the back by not informing us of what was going on and
 7 then signing the paperwork. I don't live in Clinton
 8 Township, but I sure would have felt a knife in my
 9 back if I did.
 10 What happens when a hailstorm hits or
 11 the tornadoes that do hit Knox County? We've had them
 12 out there on -- out on Harcor Road. What happens to
 13 those panels when they get damaged, when they do start
 14 leaking? Where do they go?
 15 The recycling is not up to date on
 16 these yet. It's cheaper to buy them from what I've
 17 read than to actually get them repaired and recycled.
 18 So do they go to a landfill? I don't know. I haven't
 19 been able to research it. What do they do with them?
 20 These are -- you guys are supposed to
 21 be telling us this. We don't know. So what do we do,
 22 buy them from China? Everything seems to come from
 23 China. So I don't know. Is that where it comes from?
 24 I don't know.
 25 I'm just an ignorant parts manager that

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1 has no idea because I haven't been informed. People
 2 are ignorant in different things. And with all the
 3 advancement in technology from the last 40/50 years,
 4 do you think that solar is going to be there as the
 5 primary in 40 years from now?
 6 So what are we going to do with all
 7 these millions of panels that are still up and around
 8 the United States? Not just Knox County, not just
 9 Ohio, the whole United States. They'll be obsolete.
 10 What do we do with them then? Any plans? I'm not
 11 knowing of anything.
 12 And what I -- in my little bit of time
 13 that I've had to look for it, I don't see any -- I
 14 don't see anybody that's looking into that. We've got
 15 to look at long-term. 40 years, I won't be here. My
 16 grandkids will be.
 17 The cadmium, if I'm saying that right,
 18 I may not be. Does it leak into the ground? Does it
 19 go into the water tables? Does it come up through the
 20 grass? Do the animals eat it? We eat the animals.
 21 Does it go into us?
 22 I understand that it causes kidney and
 23 heart, skin issues, lung issues. Do I know that for
 24 the fact. Absolutely not. Mr. Lawyers, I have no
 25 idea. You can go ahead and ask me. I'll tell you

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1 have no idea. Okay?
 2 But I do have one question. This good
 3 neighbor agreement. What is that? Is that some kind
 4 of hush money or something that you give to your
 5 buddies and say hey keep your mouth shut don't create
 6 any waves? That seems like a damn bribe.
 7 Am I wrong there? Tell me Mr. Lawyer,
 8 am I wrong? That's all I want to know. Am I wrong?
 9 Am I ignorant in this? Because I'm ignorant in a lot
 10 of different things. I'm not the smartest. I'm not
 11 the sharpest tool in the shed. But I would like to
 12 know.
 13 My 30 seconds -- I'm done. So thank
 14 you for your time.
 15 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 16 Any questions from counsel.
 17 Thank you for your testimony.
 18 Up next, Tom Whitson.
 19 Janet Banbury?
 20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She had to
 21 leave.
 22 JUDGE HICKS: Don Moore is next.
 23 Mr. Van Kley -- I believe is an
 24 intervenor?
 25 MR. VAN KLEY: I think it's a different

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1 Don Moore.
 2 JUDGE HICKS: Is Don Moore here?
 3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.
 4 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. And then on deck
 5 is Franklin Brown. And based on the time, he's
 6 probably going to be the last person we're going to
 7 have time for.
 8 Mr. Moore, are you an intervenor in the
 9 case?
 10 MR. MOORE: No.
 11 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Could you please
 12 raise your right hand.
 13 WHEREUPON,
 14 DON MOORE,
 15 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn
 16 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
 17 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:
 18 JUDGE HICKS: All right. Please state
 19 and spell your name for the record.
 20 THE WITNESS: Don Moore, D-O-N
 21 M-O-O-R-E. 15638 Nixon Road, Miller Township, Mount
 22 Vernon, Ohio.
 23 JUDGE HICKS: Do you live or work in
 24 the project area?
 25 THE WITNESS: I'm approximately a mile

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1 south of where some of the panels will be, if that
 2 far.
 3 JUDGE HICKS: Okay. Please go ahead
 4 with your testimony.
 5 DIRECT STATEMENT
 6 THE WITNESS: I've been concerned about
 7 this ever since I heard about it taking place. I have
 8 been involved with it. The reason I'm concerned about
 9 it, a big reason, is I used to be in the real estate
 10 business. And I know what this is going to do.
 11 When you look for a property, there are
 12 three main criteria. First thing that you look for.
 13 Those three are location, location, and location.
 14 Where do you want to live?
 15 When you have an opportunity to live in
 16 a house not around a solar panels and there's a house
 17 in around the solar panels, they are equal houses,
 18 equal land, equal distance from the house, everything
 19 about them equal.
 20 They have the same price on that house
 21 as they have on this house. Where are you going to
 22 purchase you house? It's not going to be around those
 23 solar panels. You're going to be going away from the
 24 solar panels so you don't have to look at them or hear
 25 them.

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1 I'm very concerned for my neighbors and
 2 friends, what this is going to do for their property
 3 and my property. I'm concerned about the wildlife in
 4 the area. I have some acreage where I have planted to
 5 habitat.

6 I see eagles out there. We have eagles
 7 coming back into our area. Something else we have --
 8 you don't see many of them. How many of you have seen
 9 a sandhill crane lately, or heard them? People in our
 10 area. Not many others. They're rare.

11 Spring I have had bobolinks go through,
 12 migrating through because they like my field. They're
 13 not going to like solar panels. They may even crash
 14 into them thinking it's something that they can fly
 15 through. They create a reflection that creates a
 16 mirror, like, the birds will fly into.

17 I've got pictures of an eagle recently
 18 just up on the road from me on Range Line Road right
 19 across from where they plan to put solar panels. I've
 20 got eagles down -- pictures of them down the road from
 21 me. I've got pictures of sandhill cranes out in my
 22 backyard that my neighbor sent me. I didn't happen to
 23 be home that day.

24 And what is this going to do to the
 25 other wildlife? The noise -- I'm within a distance.

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1 I probably will be hearing it. And they will be
 2 hearing from me all the time if I do.

3 I can hear my neighbors down the road
 4 with their children playing. I can hear the traffic
 5 down on Weaver Road, out on 661. Sometimes I hear the
 6 airplanes over at the airport, as far away as I am.

7 So that means I'm going to be hearing
 8 those solar panels, the inverters. That's not going
 9 to be very pleasant. And I'm not going to be very
 10 pleasant to them. I really am very concerned with the
 11 people in our area and myself as to what these panels
 12 may do.

13 I don't want to have them in our area.
 14 It's like -- it will be like a cancer on our land.
 15 They will be there probably for more than 40 years.
 16 And they won't get them cleaned up. They won't
 17 provide enough funds to clean them up. They're not
 18 providing for how much inflation we have down the
 19 road.

20 It's only a guess. Look at our
 21 inflation rate, what we've had. We've had a
 22 tremendous amount of inflation rate. It's going to
 23 take a lot of money to clean those up. They may not
 24 have that provided.

25 What will our soil be like then? They

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1 come in there and they scrape the topsoil off. I've
 2 got an area beside my house, to the west side when I
 3 built, that -- making places to -- well, to put in
 4 septic, they scraped the topsoil off.

5 And I've never put topsoil back on
 6 there. Guess what grows there? Ragweed and weeds.
 7 Probably the sheep would never want to eat them. I
 8 can't guess the other grass to go there because I
 9 haven't spent the money to put some topsoil back on
 10 it.

11 We know down in Brown what the people
 12 down there have told us that they scrape the topsoil
 13 off. We've heard other people say that they scrape
 14 the topsoil off the areas.

15 Do we want that for our area? No. I
 16 want to see the wildlife. They're very important to
 17 us. We don't know what the results will be. Man has
 18 interfered with the wildlife and caused devastation to
 19 them. And that's the history of mankind, what they've
 20 done by doing things to them.

21 I am totally against the solar panels.
 22 I don't want to see them. Neither do our neighbors.
 23 And I don't think anybody else should have a say in it
 24 that aren't in our area. You're out of Knox County,
 25 you're out of Miller Township, shouldn't have a say.

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1 Thank you.

2 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you.
 3 Any questions from counsel?
 4 Thank you for your testimony.

5 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

6 JUDGE HICKS: Is Franklin Brown --
 7 Okay. Based on the time -- and I had
 8 already called Mr. Brown, so we would have tried to
 9 squeeze him in, but not seeing him here, we are
 10 basically at 11:30.

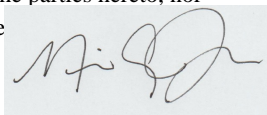
11 As we had said, we were going to cut it
 12 off there. As I described earlier, we will be working
 13 out the logistics of scheduling a second local public
 14 hearing and will publish that in a future entry that
 15 will give folks to plan on that.

16 I want to thank everyone that came out
 17 tonight, everyone that hung on until the end. And
 18 with that, we are adjourned and officially off the
 19 record.

20 THE REPORTER: Okay. We are going off
 21 the record at 11:29 p.m.
 22 (Whereupon, at 11:29 p.m., the
 23 proceeding was concluded.)
 24
 25

CERTIFICATE

1
 2 I, NIC JOSEPH, the officer before whom the
 3 foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify
 4 that any witness(es) in the foregoing proceedings,
 5 prior to testifying, were duly sworn; that the
 6 proceedings were recorded by me and thereafter reduced
 7 to typewriting by a qualified transcriptionist; that
 8 said digital audio recording of said proceedings are a
 9 true and accurate record to the best of my knowledge,
 10 skills, and ability; that I am neither counsel for,
 11 related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the
 12 action in which this was taken; and, further, that I
 13 am not a relative or employee of any counsel or
 14 attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor
 15 financially or otherwise f
 16 this action.



NIC JOSEPH

Notary Public in and for the
State of Ohio

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25

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

1
 2 I, DAVID SHAHVERDIAN, do hereby certify that
 3 this transcript was prepared from the digital audio
 4 recording of the foregoing proceeding, that said
 5 transcript is a true and accurate record of the
 6 proceedings to the best of my knowledge, skills, and
 7 ability; that I am neither counsel for, related to,
 8 nor employed by any of the parties to the action in
 9 which this was taken; and, further, that I am not a
 10 relative or employee of any counsel or attorney
 11 employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or
 12 otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.



DAVID SHAHVERDIAN

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