

FILE

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Dear Senator Burke,

I am writing with grave concern for the manner in which the public meeting for Firelands Wind (Emerson Creek, case # 18-1607-EL-BGN) was conducted by Apex Energy.

As you probably know, the Administrative Rules for the Ohio Power Siting Board under 4906-3-03 provide for a Public Hearing before an application for an economically significant wind facility is filed. Section B states:

B) No more than ninety days prior to submitting a standard certificate application to the board, the applicant shall conduct at least one informational meeting open to the public to be held in the area in which the project is located. If substantial changes are made to the application after the informational meeting, the executive director of the board shall have the authority to require another informational meeting at his/her discretion.

On November 15, 2018 at 5:00 PM, I attended the public meeting in Norwalk for the aforementioned wind project. I was followed closely by Apex employees at this event. I assume it is because I have been vocal locally in opposition to the Republic Wind facility. I reside within the footprint of Republic in Thompson Township, Seneca County and a portion of my township will be in the footprint of Emerson Creek, as well. In addition, I have family in Huron County who could not attend the hearing and I had hoped to obtain information for them. I had many questions and concerns regarding this wind project.

At one point during the meeting I stopped to speak with a couple I knew from Erie County. I had opened my folder to make a note of the location of one of the turbines in that county. An Apex employee rushed at me and loudly stated "she is signing people up". I showed her what I had written on my folder but she (Apex employee) proceeded to insist that the sheriff deputies make me leave.

The sheriff deputies were polite and explained that because this was a private venue and Apex had rented it, Apex had the authority to make me leave. I questioned how this could be a public event, posted in the Sandusky Register, yet I could be discriminated against in this way. The officers explained that I had done nothing wrong and if it was a public venue, such as a school building, they would not have to make me leave. I did leave as the officers said they would have to charge me with trespassing if I did not leave at the request of Apex.

These wind energy companies have been working in the dark of night in our counties for years. They finally have a public event required by the OPSB, and they chose a private venue where I was not welcome.

I strongly feel this meeting did not meet the standards for a public meeting as defined by regulation. This meeting did not meet the spirit of the law and appropriately engage the community without room for discrimination. Preferably a public location such as a school or community center should be the meeting location.

I believe that my experience is just one more example of the disregard wind developers show toward the people in their targeted communities. Because we have no say in approving projects or how they will be sited, they really do not think they need to be accountable to us or to take our concerns seriously. And they can throw me out of a public meeting. Who would wish for a neighbor like that? Why should we have confidence in them?

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Technician AK Date Processed NOV 20 2018

Thank you for your kind consideration. The exchange which occurred between myself and the Apex employee/officers was recorded. It can be provided at your request.

Sincerely,
Deborah Hay
Seneca County