

1 IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION
2 OF ALAMO SOLAR I, LLC FOR A CERTIFICATE OF
3 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATABILITY AND PUBLIC NEED

4 * * *

5 CASE NO. 18-1578-EL-BGN

6 * * *

7 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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9 The above-styled cause came on for
10 hearing before me, Lisa K. Keller, a Notary Public
11 in and for the State of Ohio at 6:00 p.m. on
12 Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at the Grange, Preble
13 County Council on Aging, 501 Nation Avenue, Eaton,
14 Ohio.

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16
17 APPEARANCES:

18 Jay Agranoff

19 Lauren Augostini

20 Brittany Colvin

21 Sam Randazzo, Chairman

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1 MR. AGRANOFF: The Ohio Power Citing
2 Board is scheduled for public hearing at this time
3 and place. Case Number 18-1578-EL-BGN, which is
4 captioned in the matter of the Application of
5 Alamo Solar I, LLC for a Certificate of
6 Environmental Compatibility and Public Need.

7 My name is Jay Agranoff and sitting
8 next to me is Lauren Augostini. We are the
9 administrative law judges that have been assigned
10 to hear this case on behalf of the board. Also
11 with us today is Mr. Sam Randazzo, he is the
12 chairman of the Ohio Power Citing Board and Ms.
13 Brittany Colvin, who is the deputy director from
14 the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

15 Mr. Chairman, would you like to make
16 an opening comment?

17 MR. RANDAZZO: Sure. I want to thank
18 you all for coming this evening. We are pleased
19 to be here to hear your comments and concerns, as
20 well as those of you that aren't interested in
21 supporting the project. We know this is an
22 important topic for you all and so it's important
23 for us. And I just want to thank you for the
24 great turnout and the nice facilities that we have
25 to hold this hearing tonight. So thanks very

1 much, and I look forward to hearing your comments.

2 MR. AGRANOFF: Thank you, Mr.

3 Chairman. I also want to point out that we have a

4 number of other board staff members that are

5 present here this evening. We have Mr. Matt

6 Butler. If you could please just wave and

7 identify yourself. We have Mr. Matt Shilling. We

8 have Mr. Jim O'Dell, and Ms. Allison Delong.

9 The board staff is available if you

10 have any questions concerning the board's process,

11 how to access Alamo's application or any other

12 documents submitted in this case on the board's

13 website or if you have any general questions

14 regarding your utility service.

15 If you have any questions regarding

16 the application in this case, Alamo's

17 representatives are available to answer your

18 questions about the proposed project and they are

19 just outside of this particular room and I'm sure

20 Mr. Settineri will speak a little about that as

21 well when he makes his opening statement.

22 I note that there are a number of

23 parties that have intervened in this particular

24 case and they represent various property owners,

25 governmental entities, school districts and the

1 Ohio Farm Bureau, among others. The evidentiary
2 portion of this proceeding was originally
3 scheduled to take place on June 26, 2019, pursuant
4 to the board's entry of June 10, 2019. The June
5 26th evidentiary hearing will now be continuing
6 with a hearing reconvening on July 17th at the
7 board's offices in Columbus.

8 At the evidentiary hearing, the
9 parties in this case will offer the testimony of
10 their witnesses, present evidence and
11 cross-examine witnesses of the other parties. The
12 June 10th entry also extended the intervention
13 deadline that had been established in this case.
14 I would point out that there is currently another
15 solar application pending before the board for the
16 Angelina Solar in Case Number 18-1579-EL-BGN.
17 While this case also pertains to Preble County, it
18 relates to an entirely separate project that is
19 not the subject of tonight's hearing. The public
20 hearing in that case occurred on April 30, 2019,
21 and the outcome of that case will be determined
22 entirely on its own separate merits.

23 In this case the applicant, Alamo
24 Solar, seeks a certificate of environmental
25 compatibility and public need to construct and

1 operate the Alamo Solar farm, which is a proposed
2 solar-powered electric generation facility of up
3 to 69.9 megawatts of alternating power capacity.
4 They will be located in Gasper and Washington
5 Townships in Preble County.

6 The project area encompasses
7 approximately 1,002 and a half acres of private
8 land. The applicant anticipates that construction
9 will begin in the fourth quarter of 2019 with an
10 in-service date of December, 2020, provided that
11 the board approves the project. The purpose of
12 today's public hearing is only to receive comments
13 from the public specific to Alamo Solar's
14 application to construct its proposed solar
15 project.

16 We emphasize this is your opportunity
17 to let the board now how you will be affected if
18 the proposed project is constructed and your
19 opinion about Alamo's application. Any questions
20 that you have about the project, Alamo's
21 application or the board process should be
22 addressed to the board staff or the Alamo
23 representatives prior to offering your testimony.

24 I would point out that the hearing
25 today is being transcribed by a court reporter, so

1 please make sure that you verbalize all of your
2 responses and speak clearly so that the court
3 reporter can accurately reflect your testimony.
4 If you will be or expect to be a witness on behalf
5 of an intervening party, your testimony should be
6 offered at the evidentiary hearing and not at the
7 public hearing. I would point out that the
8 intervening parties are as follows: Eaton
9 Community School District, the Ohio Farm Bureau
10 Federation, Preble Shawnee Local School District,
11 Preble County engineers, Washington Township,
12 Gasper Township, Preble Soil and Water
13 Conservation District, Preble County Planning
14 Commission, Preble County Commissioners, and the
15 Concerned Citizens of Preble County, LLC.

16 I would ask that if counsel for any
17 of these parties are present, that they please try
18 to come sit towards the front of the room in order
19 for it to be easier on the court reporter. Also,
20 if you have prepared a written statement, it would
21 be helpful to provide a copy to the court reporter
22 for reference to ensure that the transcript is
23 accurate and any attachments to your testimony
24 would be marked as an exhibit to the transcript.
25 If you have any written comments from others who

1 were not able to attend or did not wish to provide
2 testimony, you most certainly could present those
3 comments to myself or Ms. Augostini or any member
4 of the board staff to be included as part of the
5 comment section of the case style.

6 Before you present your testimony,
7 we'll ask you to come forward to the microphone up
8 here in the front and we'll ask you to take an
9 oath where you will affirm that the testimony you
10 are about to give is true and accurate to your own
11 personal knowledge and we'll also ask you to make
12 sure you state and spell your full name and your
13 address for the record. We'll also ask as to
14 whether or not you reside in Gasper or Washington
15 Townships or one of the other townships or another
16 part of the vicinity here in Preble County.

17 Your testimony will be considered as
18 part of the record in this case and it will be
19 able to be reviewed by the board for its decision
20 regarding Alamo's application. Additionally,
21 counsel for any of the parties in this case will
22 have the opportunity to ask any clarifying
23 questions of you regarding the testimony that
24 you'll be providing today.

25 Once you are finished, you are

1 certainly free to leave or you certainly may stay
2 for the entirety of the hearing. We would only
3 ask that you please be courteous and try to
4 refrain from speaking out while testimony is being
5 given or applauding just because it could be
6 disruptive in terms of the development of the
7 transcript for this particular case.

8 Are there any questions at this time
9 before we begin? If not, we will call the first
10 witness. At this time we'll take the appearances
11 of the parties and if the applicant could please
12 provide their appearance.

13 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you, Your
14 Honors. On behalf of Alamo Solar I, LLC, Mike
15 Settineri with the law firm of Vorys, Sater,
16 Seymour and Pease, 52 East Gay Street, Columbus,
17 Ohio, 43215. Thank you.

18 MR. AGRANOFF: Thank you. Is counsel
19 here on behalf of Eaton Community School District?
20 How about on behalf of the Ohio Farm Bureau
21 Federation?

22 MR. ARNOLD: Sir, my name is Dale
23 Arnold. I'm director of energy, utility and local
24 government policy with the Ohio Farm Bureau, 280
25 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio. We are a party

1 of record in this case. I'm here strictly to
2 observe. Thank you.

3 MR. AGRANOFF: Thank you. On behalf
4 of the Preble Shawnee Local School District? How
5 about on behalf of the Preble County engineer?

6 MS. WEST: My name is Kathryn West
7 and I'm here today -- I'm just going to go through
8 all of them -- on behalf of the Preble County
9 engineer, Preble County Planning Commission,
10 Preble Soil and Water Conversation District,
11 Gasper and Washington Township trustees as well as
12 co-counsel for the Preble County Commissioners.
13 I'm at 101 East Main Street, Eaton, Ohio, 45320.

14 MR. AGRANOFF: Thank you. And on
15 behalf of the Concerned Citizens of Preble County,
16 LLC?

17 MS. VONDERHAAR: Rachael Vonderhaar,
18 trustee for the Concerned Citizens of Preble
19 County, LLC, 4636 State Route 725 West, Camden,
20 Ohio, 45311.

21 MR. AGRANOFF: Thank you.

22 MS. AUGOSTINI: Our first witness is
23 Jacob Sorrell.

24 (Jacob Sorrell was sworn.)

25 MR. SORRELL: My name is Jacob

1 Sorrell. I live on 352 Longman Road, Eaton, Ohio.
2 45320.

3 MS. AUGOSTINI: Are you a citizen of
4 Washington, Gasper or --

5 MR. SORRELL: Gasper.

6 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

7 MR. SORRELL: Good evening. Good
8 evening, everyone. My name is Jacob Sorrell. My
9 family owns farmland in Gasper Township which
10 shares a common border with the proposed Alamo
11 Solar facility. I'm the fourth generation on this
12 farm. What I have to say tonight is a result of
13 discussion with my family and adjacent farmers.

14 When my family and neighboring
15 farmers were first notified with the proposed
16 facility, the main concern was the effect it would
17 have on tile drainage. Tile drainage systems do
18 not also end and begin at property lines. These
19 systems drain a watershed area. In plain words,
20 water runs down a hill across property lines.
21 There are several places where the tile drains
22 from adjacent farms into the Alamo and there are
23 places where the tile drains from the Alamo into
24 adjacent farms.

25 Alamo has committed to finding these

1 tile lines and will make adjustments to avoid
2 driving posts through these tile lines. If the
3 tile is damaged during construction, Alamo will
4 make necessary repairs. Please bear in mind, some
5 drainage may not be known for a year or more.

6 Now it's time to discuss the
7 condition of existing tile. All the tile have a
8 useful life and like everything built by humans,
9 it will need to be eventually replaced. Now it's
10 time for show and tell. I have two examples here,
11 both are four-inch external diameter concrete
12 drain tiles, each one foot in length. The one
13 tile has never been in the ground. It has a
14 smooth texture and is flat which permits lying end
15 to end with no gaps, which the new tile will be on
16 your right. This joint will be watertight and
17 would permit water to seep into the tile and drain
18 off, the other tile probably installed in the
19 1950s on your left and removed in about 2000, it
20 was it was in the ground for approximately 50
21 years.

22 As you can see, there has been severe
23 deterioration in the concrete. This has resulted
24 in reduced outside diameter and reduced length.
25 The strength of this tile is far less than it was

1 when it was new. The reduced length increases the
2 gap at the point of the soil from above, entered
3 into the tile and left a hole in the ground above
4 the tile. The line of tile was about 300 feet in
5 length and required total replacement. You cannot
6 repair tile which is in this condition. It has to
7 reach the end of its life.

8 There was a concrete tile
9 manufacturing company in Camden, Ohio here in
10 Preble County which produced a lot of tile in the
11 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and early '70s. The tile is
12 now in the ground of many farms in Preble County
13 and surrounding areas. It is for the most part in
14 poor condition and requires total replacement in
15 the near future. Sizes of the tile range from 4,
16 6, 8, 10, 12 and 15 and possibly 18-inch tile.
17 Replacement of lines of tile perhaps ranging from
18 a few hundred feet to more than 1,000 feet will
19 require removal of solar panels and posts to use
20 necessary equipment, such as a tile trencher or
21 backhoes.

22 Now I would like to briefly talk
23 about property values. These tile systems must be
24 maintained to retain a current value of the
25 farmland. Corn, soybeans, wheat and alfalfa do

1 not produce good yields on their roots when their
2 roots are saturated. Without good drainage, the
3 value of land could go to the following: I would
4 not buy that swamp if you gave it to me.

5 I will close my presentation with
6 this question. If this solar facility is built,
7 will the owner take sections out of service,
8 remove solar panels and posts to permit the
9 replacement of drain tiles as needed to maintain
10 the system in its present condition? That's it.

11 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

12 MR. SORRELL: You guys are welcome if
13 you want to take them tiles with you. You want
14 them?

15 MR. RANDAZZO: Thanks for bringing
16 them.

17 MR. AGRANOFF: Any questions from
18 counsel?

19 MR. SETTINERI: No.

20 MS. AUGOSTINI: I apologize if I
21 pronounce anybody's name wrong tonight. Thank
22 you. Please state and spell your name.

23 (John Altom was sworn.)

24 MR. ALTOM: My name is John Altom, I
25 live at 1950 Camden Road, Washington Township,

1 Eaton, Ohio. And I've lived in Preble County my
2 entire life. I would like to thank all of you for
3 giving me the opportunity to testify as to why I
4 and so many community members oppose the Alamo
5 solar project. This evening I want to draw your
6 attention to the way in which I feel Open Road
7 Renewables has attempted to push this project
8 through and not notify the community of their
9 rights. Open Road Renewables has written in their
10 application that they have been transparent in
11 this process, but I have a few reasons that would
12 contradict that.

13 We know that Open Road Renewables has
14 been soliciting landowners to lease fertile
15 crop-producing ground since 2016. We were
16 notified of their project in November of 2018. In
17 this application, Open Road Renewables references
18 the positive financial impact this will have on
19 our community. In a public meeting in the
20 commissioners' chambers on February 7, 2019, they
21 stated that the Alamo facility would be monitored
22 from a separate location, and this directly
23 conflicts with the statement that they had
24 previously said about bringing long-term jobs to
25 the area.

1 Following the Angelina Solar project
2 hearing, Open Road Renewables posted on the
3 Angelina Solar Facebook page thank you to everyone
4 that attended last night's open house. This is
5 not an open house but a legal proceeding and to
6 call it anything but that is very misleading.

7 Open Road Renewables wants the Ohio
8 Power Citing Board to think that our community has
9 partnered with them to bring an innovative energy
10 source to Preble County. We have not done that.
11 We do not know at this point what the impact on
12 our tax base will be from this solar facility.

13 Will the commissioners vote to be a
14 pilot county? What does that pilot funding look
15 like and how can it be used?

16 You are being asked to issue a
17 certificate to a project that has submitted an
18 incomplete picture of their intent in this
19 project. They intend on collecting federal
20 incentives, all of them that are possible,
21 offering bottom dollar leases and agreements to
22 landowners and building these facilities just to
23 sell them to a company that we do not know who
24 they are or how they are going to keep these
25 facilities running. Open Road Renewables stated

1 on February 7, 2019, that they had no interest in
2 running or maintaining these projects.

3 We are asking the Ohio Power Citing
4 Board to investigate Open Road Renewables'
5 proposed plan. Don't be distracted by the great
6 marketing, fancy logos and fancy explanations.
7 Can this facility produce the amount of energy
8 that it says it can? Will this project add to the
9 money available for services in Preble County?
10 \$7,000 per megawatt has been proposed as the
11 payment in lieu of taxes. Is that enough to
12 replace lost tax revenue from the way that the
13 land is being repurchased. Will it be enough in
14 20 years after there has been inflation added to
15 our economy? This is the type of transparent
16 communication we are looking for. Thank you.

17 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
18 spell your name and give your address.

19 (McPherson Altom was sworn.)

20 MR. ALTOM: My name is McPherson
21 Alton, I live at 1950 Camden Road, Eaton, Ohio.

22 MS. AUGOSTINI: And do you live in
23 Gasper Township, Washington --

24 MR. ALTOM: Washington.

25 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please proceed.

1 MR. ALTOM: My name is McPherson
2 Alton. As I said, I live in Eaton, Ohio, 1950
3 Camden Road, Washington Township. Today I'll be
4 reading a letter from Jeff Dare who was unable to
5 be here today, but it lays out some very good
6 points for us.

7 Members and guests, my name is Jeff
8 Dare. I'm a life-long resident of Dixie Township.
9 My family started farming here in the 1950s. Five
10 generations have lived around here by now and this
11 is our land, this land is our livelihood and
12 important to us. Open Roads has decided that it
13 would be a good idea to build solar fields where
14 we now grow beans, corn and cattle. I along with
15 many of my neighbors and members of this coalition
16 strongly disagree with this. We fail to see the
17 need for constructing a solar panel field or
18 fields in this area. The reasons are plentiful.
19 There are many reasons not to build here than
20 there are good reasons to build here.

21 We as a nation are increasing in
22 population and we no doubt need more energy to
23 accommodate a growing population in industry.
24 However, solar panels in Ohio is not the right
25 answer for more energy. As I understand it, solar

1 panels rely on sunlight to make energy. Do you
2 realize how many gloomy days we experience in the
3 State of Ohio? Many, many days are no sun or
4 partial sun at best.

5 Our request to Open Roads is if you
6 want to build solar fields, why not construct them
7 in Arizona or New Mexico where the sun shines
8 practically every day. It is not as if we live --
9 we here in Dixon, Israel or Gasper Townships or
10 Washington Township will use or even have the
11 chance to use the energy proposed by these fields.
12 It is known that the energy produced here will
13 travel into a grid and be used who knows where,
14 but not here. We know that.

15 Furthermore, with the construction of
16 these fields there is a problem of how to
17 transport the energy produced. This means more
18 invasion of farm ground to build substations,
19 battery bank terminals and electric power lines.
20 Many lines will run underground, which brings up
21 another topic. Who is going to be responsible for
22 making certain that underground dish lines are
23 preserved and not destroyed?

24 There are miles and miles of drainage
25 tile in these proposed areas and once solar fields

1 are constructed, how will we as farmers maintain
2 the tile lines and outlets? I'm sure that Open
3 Roads would frown on farmers entering a
4 newly-constructed solar field with a backhoe.

5 In other states, more desert-type
6 areas, drainage tile would not be an issue. So we
7 ask, why here? We as taxpayers in this county are
8 asking why our commissioners are not vehemently
9 opposing this whole idea? These townships are
10 regarded as agricultural acres and not a solar
11 panel industry. It seems to many of us here
12 tonight that there are better alternatives than to
13 try to harvest the sun's energy here. Do it
14 somewhere else where more sunlight is available.

15 Solar panels are not all that
16 efficient compared to natural gas or coal. We
17 here tonight feel that the government subsidies
18 awarded to the proponents and contractors that are
19 pushing for this might very well have something to
20 do with their plan to move forward here in Preble
21 County. There may be a need for solar fields, but
22 not here.

23 Another concern for many of us here,
24 what are the long-term effects of deteriorating
25 solar panels, hazardous materials used in them,

1 underground leaking of electricity produced and
2 the changes in the ecosystem around these proposed
3 fields? We know these are potential problems and
4 are very real, especially to those who live in
5 close proximity to the panels. Answers to these
6 questions seem to be in short supply or there's
7 not enough data from existing areas to give a fair
8 assessment.

9 Are these proposed fields going to
10 interrupt cell phone signals, GPS readings and
11 satellite signals? We need answers to these
12 questions. Some of us fear that if these fields
13 are built, the answer man will disappear right
14 along with the construction crew. I can tell you
15 all here tonight from personal experience that
16 recently when on our road fiberoptic lines were
17 being installed underground, that the workmen were
18 doing an unsatisfactory job. When I confronted
19 them about the damage they were causing, they
20 handed me a business card with a phone number and
21 said if you had any complaints to call this number
22 and they kept right on plowing into cables and
23 breaking tiles as they went. We are afraid this
24 same type of irresponsible workmanship might be
25 common with the construction of solar fields.

1 Sometimes anymore, sad as it seems, some people
2 just don't give a damn, right or wrong.

3 A few area landowners will profit
4 greatly from this project, we know that. It is a
5 fact. That being said, any landowner has a right
6 to do with his land as he sees fit as long as it
7 is within the boundary of the law. We here
8 tonight do not feel that it is a fair tradeoff,
9 putting our land, health and well-being in the
10 balance for unneeded energy from solar panels in
11 Preble County and should be out of the question.

12 As the life span of the project goes
13 forth, it is proven by our county officials that
14 our property taxes will increase, to what extent
15 we don't know yet. Also, what will these panels
16 do to property values near them. Township
17 residents are concerned that their farms or
18 property will decrease in value, possibly by huge
19 numbers. Open Roads should address this issue and
20 be forthcoming with information as of what has
21 transpired in other locations.

22 There are many unanswered questions
23 and this is too big of a project to simply let it
24 commence and then learn from the mistakes and
25 misfortunes the hard way or worse, after it's too

1 late. Thank you for your attention and the
2 opportunity to address this group. Please take
3 into consideration our ideas and concerns.

4 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Mr.
5 Alton, do you know if the gentleman who wrote that
6 letter is in Washington or Gasper Township?

7 MR. ALTOM: Dixon.

8 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Does
9 counsel have any questions?

10 MR. SETTINERI: No, thank you.

11 (Catherine Clippinger was sworn.)

12 MS. AUGOSTINI: State your name and
13 address for the record.

14 MS. CLIPPINGER: My name is Catherine
15 Clippinger. I live at 1050 Mann Road, Eaton,
16 Gasper Township. I have a few written statements
17 from people that were unwilling to speak this
18 evening and I was wondering if I could submit
19 their written opinions?

20 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please.

21 MS. CLIPPINGER: Thank you.

22 Mr. SETTINERI: Your Honors, will
23 these go on the public comment docket?

24 MR. AGRANOFF: Yes.

25 MS. CLIPPINGER: I first wanted to

1 make a comment. When I first got here today, I
2 noticed that Open Roads Renewable, for being a
3 green company, every single one of them drove
4 separately. I don't know why, I like to carpool.
5 Just a little comment. I'd like to begin my
6 speech with an excerpt from Paul Harvey. And on
7 the eighth day, God looked down on his planned
8 paradise and said, I need a caretaker, so God made
9 a farmer. I need somebody to work all day in the
10 fields, so God made a farmer. Who at planting
11 time and harvest season will finish his 40-hour
12 week by Tuesday noon then put in another 72 hours,
13 so God made a farmer. It had to be somebody who'd
14 plow deep and straight, not cut corners, somebody
15 to seed and weed and rake and disk and plow plans,
16 so God made a farmer.

17 Ask any farmer you know, we will tell
18 you it is not about the money we might make, it is
19 about a way of life that we love. We know that
20 God has entrusted us with a precious resource,
21 productive farmland and we're proud to feed his
22 world with the resources he has provided us.
23 However, sometimes ignorant hope or maybe greed
24 clouds the heads of those entrusted with our
25 greatest natural resource. Some farmers may turn

1 their farmland into solar because they want to
2 embrace change.

3 For farmers, change is trading in a
4 new tractor. Change is embracing technology to
5 run a more efficient operation. Change is trying
6 a new hybrid for greater yields, and change is
7 passing your farming operation on to a younger
8 generation. Taking 1,000 acres of land out of
9 production for energy use is also change, but not
10 a positive one. My concern is the 1,000 acres for
11 Alamo is only the beginning.

12 Six miles from the Alamo Solar
13 project is the Angelina Solar project. Both
14 projects have a one at the end of their names.
15 Will a solar developer follow the direction of
16 their counterparts in Highland County where the
17 total agricultural acreage count changing to solar
18 has reached 10,000 acres? Preble County's economy
19 would suffer if that amount of acreage were
20 removed from ag production.

21 Ron Heiniger, a North Carolina State
22 Cooperative Extension Service professor states
23 that if farmers lack sufficient land to remain
24 viable, it will create a tumbling domino effect.
25 He states, what's going to happen to the equipment

1 dealer? The feed realtors? The fertilizer
2 distributors? People who bring in limestone on
3 rail cars and by the truck load? He asks, they
4 are not going -- sorry. They are not going to be
5 in business, he states. He warns, if enough
6 farmland is taken out of production, the
7 infrastructure would collapse and grain and animal
8 production would move to the other states or
9 offshore. By the time 20-year solar installation
10 leases expire, it would be extremely difficult to
11 recreate the agricultural infrastructure from
12 scratch, end quote.

13 It would be illogical and
14 irresponsible to waste productive farmland.
15 According to Michigan State University, by 2050
16 the world's population will reach 1.2 billion.
17 The general consensus is that global agricultural
18 production has to be increased by 60 to 70 percent
19 from the current levels to meet the increased food
20 demand in 2050. While better yielding hybrids
21 will help us get to that increased production,
22 reducing productive land will not.

23 As a population grows, so will
24 housing needs. This alone will encroach on our
25 tillable land. And most recently, mother nature

1 continues to be in control of farm productivity.
2 It seems there's an ever-increasing weather event
3 that affects food production.

4 An article by Tyler Durden on
5 zerohedge.com, 2019 could be the worst year of
6 U.S. agriculture in modern American history. The
7 unprecedented flooding in the west and the
8 continuous rainfall could leave more than 10
9 million acres of farm land go unused this year.
10 And according to Bloomberg News, U.S. farmers grow
11 one-third of the world's corn and soybeans. While
12 we cannot control the weather, we can control how
13 farmland is being used. There are other ways to
14 produce energy, but there are not other ways to
15 produce food.

16 Some misled individuals will argue
17 that the farmland going into solar can be returned
18 to productive land at the end of the project in 40
19 years. According to an article from the Coastal
20 AgroBusiness, the panels are considered toxic
21 waste due to the use of metals like cadmium and
22 rare earth elements. These panels only have an
23 expected lifespan of 20 years. Since they cannot
24 be placed in landfills and are not accepted for
25 recycling by any plant in the United States, it is

1 highly likely that they will be either abandoned

2 onsite or the landowners will be forced to pay for

3 them to be shipped to third-world countries.

4 This fear may come to fruition

5 because Open Roads Renewables has not provided a

6 decommissioning plan to the Ohio Power Citing

7 Board in their application for Alamo. How can we

8 citizens protect our land from such abuse? Ask

9 the residents of Oregon, one of the most

10 progressively green states in our nation.

11 Although they are on the forefront to embrace

12 solar energy, Oregon recognizes the need to

13 protect prime farmland. Last month the Oregon

14 Land Conservation and Development Commission

15 approved new rules that restrict commercial solar

16 development on millions of acres of high-valued

17 farmland across the state. The people of Preble

18 County also recognize the need to protect this

19 prime farmland.

20 The Preble County comprehensive

21 economic development strategy and land use plan

22 was revised and adopted by our three current

23 commissioners on February 1st, 2017. The plan in

24 part states, that county will dispose of any

25 development which conflicts with agricultural

1 productivity.

2 I urge Open Roads, the Power Citing
3 Board and our local and state officials to respect
4 the county's plan. The rest of Ohio should learn
5 from Preble County's and Oregon's example and
6 protect agricultural land before it's too late.

7 In closing, Genesis 2:15 says, the
8 Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of
9 Eden to work it and take care of it. This verse
10 explains why God made a farmer. We are
11 commissioned to protect the land God gave us.
12 Because of this, I'm opposed to the Alamo Solar
13 facility. Thank you.

14 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Mr.
15 Settineri?

16 MR. SETTINERI: No, thank you.
17 (Dorothy Clippinger was sworn.)

18 MS. AUGOSTINI: State your name and
19 address.

20 MS. CLIPPINGER: My name is Dorothy
21 Clippinger. I live at 1050 Mann Road, Eaton,
22 Ohio, Gasper Township.

23 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

24 MS. CLIPPINGER: I am a fifth
25 generation farm girl from Gasper Township. My

1 family both on my mother's side as well as my
2 father's side has farmed in Preble County for over
3 100 years. For generations we have faced drought,
4 disease, weak markets and many other factors that
5 have threatened our livelihood. My family has
6 always been able to survive those uncontrollable
7 adversities and we continue to have a successful
8 farming operation that can be passed to the next
9 generation.

10 Now my family's historic century farm
11 is facing a new threat as Open Roads Renewable
12 proposes to build a large-scale solar power plant
13 adjacent to our family farm. My father is a
14 full-time farmer and his livelihood depends on the
15 income from our farm. I am concerned that a
16 neighboring solar facility will affect the
17 productivity of our land and he will no longer be
18 able to make a decent living by farming.

19 Our farm produces corn and soybeans.
20 We already have some yield loss due to wildlife
21 consuming our crops. If Alamo is approved, our
22 farm will be sandwiched between the 1,000 acre
23 solar facility to the north and Woodland Trails
24 boy scout camp to the south. When 1,000
25 neighboring acres are out of production and fenced

1 off, how will that affect the migration and
2 feeding habits of the wildlife.

3 Aaron Hazelton, a wind, energy and
4 wildlife administrator with the Ohio Department of
5 Natural Resources Division of Wildlife confirmed
6 to us that our farm will see a large increase in
7 wildlife traffic and we should expect additional
8 crop damage is Alamo is approved. Who will
9 compensate our family for the additional loss of
10 yields?

11 We also pasture brood cows and sell
12 feeder cows. We worry that Alamo's existence will
13 threaten the herd safety. We are not only
14 concerned about the confirmed increase of coyote
15 activity but the dangers of electromagnetic fields
16 the solar panels will create. According to a
17 March 2019 article from The Blaze, cattle from
18 farms adjacent to solar facilities in the Brittany
19 region of France have lost over 300 head of cattle
20 in the last five years. Farmers in the area began
21 reporting cattle deaths after PV solar panels were
22 installed on the land. Thibaut Bouchut, an
23 adviser from France's Sanitary Defense Group
24 explained that cattle are more susceptible to the
25 dangers of electromagnetic fields because they

1 only have about one-third the electrical
2 resistance of humans. If Alamo causes a danger to
3 our herd, they should be financially responsible
4 for our losses.

5 Another concern is the drainage of
6 our fields after the neighboring ground is
7 disrupted by the installation of solar panels.
8 According to North Carolina State University crop
9 scientist Ron Heiniger, data shows solar panels
10 channelized water causing it to leave the site
11 faster and infiltrate neighboring properties. He
12 states, some farmers confirmed that their fields
13 became wetter after the placement of nearby solar
14 facilities. The farmers now have difficulty
15 getting in to till their land to prepare for
16 planting.

17 Every farmer in this room can tell
18 you how stressful it was this year to get crops in
19 because of the wet spring. Why would we invite a
20 solar plant to come in next to us and create the
21 challenge every planting season. One other area
22 for worry is fire from the solar facility. My
23 fear is the fire could spread by the north wind
24 onto our land destroying our crops. Crop fire is
25 considered an act of God and not covered by

1 insurance. I also fear the fire could spread to
2 our livestock barns or equipment barn and
3 ultimately to your farmhouse that was built by my
4 great-great grandparents. Is our small volunteer
5 fire department ready to battle a fire within a
6 solar facility? I've not found anything in
7 Alamo's application to the Ohio Power Citing Board
8 that states they are willing to train or provide
9 needed equipment for the Gasper Township Fire
10 Department.

11 In addition to fire concerns, the
12 National Weather Service reported there were
13 tornadoes that touched down in Eaton and West
14 Alexandria on May 19th of this year. Preble
15 County EMA director David Anderson reported that
16 on May 30th there were 19 tornados that touched
17 down in our area, one of which was an EF-4 in
18 nearby Trotwood. I fear what a tornado would do
19 to solar panels near me.

20 Although Open Roads representatives
21 Doug Erling and David Savage have said the panels
22 will be attached to structures staked ten feet
23 into the ground, no one from the company has been
24 able to answer our concerns that the panels
25 themselves could be blown loose from the structure

1 resulting in breakage of the panels and damage to
2 adjoining land. Who would be responsible for
3 cleaning the destruction?

4 Lastly, I want to comment on the lack
5 of transparency by Alamo and Open Roads
6 Renewables. We were sent a letter by Alamo Solar
7 in November in regard to a public information
8 meeting about their proposed project that would
9 be, as stated in their letter, about two miles
10 south of Eaton. Nowhere in the letter did it
11 inform us that the project would be adjacent to
12 our land six miles south of Eaton.

13 I wish Alamo had been more truthful
14 in their letter so that we could have gone to the
15 meeting to learn about our rights as landowners.
16 I believe Alamo purposefully provided insufficient
17 information to avoid our opposition to the
18 project.

19 In conclusion, the proposed solar
20 facility creates factors that threaten our farm
21 through possible loss of yields, loss of
22 livestock, reduced land viability, fire hazards
23 and tornado damage. My grandparents, my
24 great-grandparents and my great-great grandparents
25 did not often have control of the factors against

1 them when farming our land. By speaking at this
2 hearing, I'm trying to gain control and to protect
3 the land that has given so much to the generations
4 of my family. Please know that I am opposed to
5 the Alamo Solar facility. Thank you.

6 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Comments?

7 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honors, if I
8 may, one thing I'd like to request is the idea to
9 preserve a hearsay objection on third-party
10 statements, to the extent that it would be used in
11 any briefing in this matter.

12 MR. AGRANOFF: So noted.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Could that be
14 repeated?

15 MR. AGRANOFF: Mr. Settineri, why
16 don't you go to the mic and --

17 MR. SETTINERI: I requested to the
18 administrative law judges that we be allowed to
19 preserve as a hearsay objection on the third-party
20 statements to the extent that they are used in any
21 briefing in this matter.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can't hear
23 you.

24 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honors, I would
25 like to make an objection and request that I be

1 able to preserve as a hearsay objection any
2 third-party statements to the extent they are used
3 in any briefing in this matter. Thank you.

4 (Kendale Hamilton was sworn.)

5 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
6 spell your name.

7 THE WITNESS: My name is Kendale
8 Hamilton, K-E-N-D-A-L-E, and I live at 1731 West
9 Consolidated Road in Washington Township, Eaton,
10 Ohio, 45320.

11 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Proceed.

12 MR. HAMILTON: About nine months ago
13 members of Preble County started becoming aware of
14 a private solar company making plans for two
15 different solar farms in Preble County. This
16 company wants to take up to 994 acres of land for
17 the Alamo Solar farm in Gasper and Washington
18 Townships and 993 acres of land for the Angelina
19 Solar farm in Israel and Dixon Townships.

20 Overall, this is 1,928 acres of
21 Preble County taken for their solar panel
22 facilities. With so many differing options, these
23 solar panels have begun to pit farmer against
24 farmer and neighbor against neighbor. The
25 installment of solar power plants in rural

1 communities must be halted due to their negative
2 effects on the environment, the value of
3 agricultural land and their disadvantages to the
4 community.

5 To begin, the solar farms do, in
6 fact, harm the environment. One aspect of their
7 environmental impact is a use of toxic chemicals
8 during production. A solar panel is made up of
9 multiple photovoltaic cells. Manufacturing these
10 cells uses toxic chemicals such as hydrochloric
11 acid, sulfuric acid, nitric acid, as well as
12 others. There is also the possibility for
13 environmental contamination if any equipment were
14 improbably disposed of upon decommissioning or if
15 damaged while in service on the farmland. The
16 contamination could affect surface and groundwater
17 in the surrounding area.

18 This brings up another point of how
19 solar farms are not good for our environment. The
20 manufacturer of these solar panels are responsible
21 for their disposal or recycling once they are
22 decommissioned. As of now, many solar panels end
23 up in landfills at the end of their life cycle.
24 Researchers with the Electric Power Research
25 Institute did a study on solar panels and

1 concluded that the disposal in regular landfills
2 is not recommended in case panels break and cause
3 toxic materials to leak into the soil. Disposal
4 is a major issue, reported Michael Shellenberger,
5 writer of environmental and energy, forbes.com.
6 The previous articles cites that solar panels
7 create 300 times more toxic waste per unit of
8 energy than do nuclear power plants. Also pointed
9 out is that panels can end up in waste dumps in
10 developing countries such as India and China where
11 these toxic chemicals could cause devastating
12 health effects for members of nearby communities.

13 There are so many issues involved
14 with disposal that could be devastating effects
15 not only on rural communities but on other
16 communities as well. Before putting solar power
17 plants in rural communities, it is necessary to
18 analyze and evaluate the potential impacts.
19 Nowadays everybody is worried about small plastic
20 straws causing problems to the environment, but
21 what could a massive solar panel do?

22 A final aspect of their impact
23 environmentally is that solar farms can pose an
24 extreme cost for some wildlife. The seven-foot
25 tall fences to be placed around the solar power

1 facilities coming into Preble County will take
2 away the habitat of local animals. Deer, coyotes,
3 fox and a number of other animals will lose area
4 for grazing and finding their food. Their
5 soon-limited habitat could cause an increased
6 number of animals searching for food in the
7 gardens of nearby homes.

8 Not only do these facilities take
9 away habitat, but they also affect a bird's
10 migration. Many birds migrate to survive, and
11 like all electrical generating facilities, solar
12 farms produce magnetic fields. These magnetic
13 fields can interfere with the bird's ability to
14 see earth's magnetic field which gives them a
15 sense of direction when migrating. This aspect of
16 solar farms is particularly concerning to members
17 of Preble County due to many birds that migrate to
18 Hueston Woods, a state park in the area.

19 So it is vital that the construction
20 of solar power facilities in rural communities be
21 put to a stop. They must not be put on
22 agricultural land simply because it is not worth
23 the risk.

24 Some say that farmland is the best
25 place for solar power plants because the land is

1 already flat and cleared. However, the building
2 of solar facilities on any area of land requires
3 clearing and grading, which results in soil
4 compaction, potential changes of drainage channels
5 and increased runoff and erosion, which is bad for
6 farmland.

7 Farmland is far too important for the
8 world's future to allow it to be a solar farm.
9 Experts say that by 2050 there will be two more
10 million people to feed, an estimated world
11 population of nine billion total. A recent study
12 found that crop yields haven't been rising at a
13 sufficient pace to meet this projected demand of
14 nine billion people by 2050. There will be a
15 large demand for food with little supply.

16 Taking up farmland for solar power
17 will only progress this problem. The world's
18 farmland needs to be valued and put to better use
19 than for solar farms. Recently the Oregon Land
20 Conservation and Development Commission put a
21 value on their farmland. The commission voted to
22 adopt a statewide rule to no longer allow the
23 construction of solar power plants on soils that
24 are determined class one, class two, which are
25 prime or unique soils, unless the solar developer

1 can determine a dual use, such as beekeeping.
2 This rule was primarily made to try to avoid the
3 distribution of agricultural productivity in
4 Oregon. This rule expires in 2022 and then the
5 commission will re-evaluate and determine if they
6 want to make the rule permanent. It is necessary
7 we follow in Oregon's footsteps to regulate the
8 construction of solar farms in rural communities.
9 It is necessary to value agriculture land.

10 Next, solar power plants bring
11 negative drawbacks to rural communities. As seen
12 in Preble County, the solar panels have caused
13 disagreements between local farmers and neighbors.
14 In Preble County, a particular family built a
15 house five years ago on 17 acres of land they
16 purchased. Recently, their neighbor who owns the
17 adjoining land had leased his farmland to the
18 private company developing the solar farms. This
19 family's home will be surrounded on all four sides
20 by solar panels. Due to this, they are now making
21 plans to move out of their home. This situation
22 has caused tension and bad blood between this
23 family and their neighbor.

24 Similar situations have also caused
25 tension between local farmers. Another example of

1 their negative effect to rural communities is at
2 an Arizona fire department. At an Arizona plant,
3 eight firefighters were hospitalized after an
4 explosion of a utility site's lithium batteries
5 used in storage and distribution of solar energy.
6 Putting solar facilities in rural communities not
7 only affects farmers but also has an impact on
8 local fire departments, an interesting point of
9 concern for some members of Preble County as with
10 the Open Roads Renewable company.

11 The concerning issue with the Open
12 Roads company is that if obtained, could sell
13 their certificate to another company. Open Roads
14 has recently sold a different Ohio solar
15 certificate to a Canadian-based solar company.
16 One article explains, Canadian Renewable Energy
17 Company, Innergex Renewable Energy, they have
18 acquired a solar-powered project with the
19 prospective capacity of 260 megawatts in Brown
20 County, Ohio. It bought the 260 megawatt
21 Hillcrest project from original developers Open
22 Roads Renewables, LLC and MAP Renewable Energy,
23 LLC. Innergex says the project has already
24 cleared all permitting processes and carries a
25 certificate of environmental compatibility and

1 public need to construct an electrical generation
2 facility from the Ohio Power and Citing Board.

3 What is to keep Open Roads Renewable
4 from selling the solar farms in Preble County to a
5 company the citizens know nothing about. This
6 could lead to more negative drawbacks to the
7 community.

8 To conclude, we must stop solar farms
9 from being put on agricultural land that
10 negatively affects our environment through the use
11 of toxic chemicals and production and the event of
12 decommissioning and the distribution --
13 destruction of local habitats. Our farmland is
14 too valuable to be wasting it on solar farms.

15 Solar power plants negatively affect
16 rural communities through the tension they create
17 in community members along with their impact on
18 local fire departments. In general, solar energy
19 has a potential to be a great thing that could
20 solve many environmental issues. However, when
21 they are installed on farmland, their negatives
22 outweigh the positives. Thank you.

23 MS. AUGOSTINI: Mr. Settineri?

24 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honors, just to
25 save time, I'll make that objection, preserving

1 the prior objection, just an ongoing objection.

2 MR. AGRANOFF: So noted. I would
3 also point out that to the extent that your
4 testimony may for the most part reiterate that
5 which has already been testified to and you feel
6 that you may not necessarily have anything new or
7 novel to be provided for the record, you are
8 certainly free to sign -- we have papers in the
9 back over where our staff is situated and you can
10 just put your name and address reflecting the fact
11 that either you're in support of the prior
12 testimony that was either in support of the
13 application or in opposition to the application
14 and that would basically then reflect your
15 feedback and input regarding this particular
16 matter and then you wouldn't necessarily have to
17 be testifying on the record.

18 So I just wanted to call that to your
19 attention in case you wanted to avail yourself of
20 that option. Thank you.

21 (Curtis Notestine was sworn.)

22 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
23 spell your name for the record and your address.

24 MR. NOTESTINE: My name is Curtis
25 Notestine, C-U-R-T-I-S, last name

1 N-O-T-E-S-T-I-N-E. Address is 1852 Deerbrook
2 Trail in Beavercreek, Ohio, and that's in Greene
3 County.

4 MR. AGRANOFF: Which county?

5 MR. NOTESTINE: Greene.

6 MS. AUGOSTINI: You may proceed.

7 MR. NOTESTINE: I'm an engineering
8 consultant specializing in computer architecture
9 and microcircuit design. I have a Master's degree
10 in computer engineering from the University of
11 California at Santa Cruz. I'm here today because
12 I have great concerns about the environmental
13 impact of solar panels on agricultural land and
14 also because of the recent devastation that I
15 experienced in Beavercreek, Ohio, in that even
16 though I wasn't hit directly, the high winds
17 knocked over five or six trees two or three feet
18 in diameter on my property. So I can see the
19 devastation of what tornadoes can do.

20 From one of the previous hearings,
21 Douglas Herling on behalf of Open Road Renewables
22 stated that solar contained the following
23 chemicals, cadmium telluride, copper, indium,
24 gallium and selenide. These chemicals can leach
25 into the field upon a disaster of hurricane,

1 tornado. We are not too prone to earthquakes
2 here, but I've researched some of these chemicals
3 and most of my data comes from the material safety
4 data sheets on these chemicals.

5 On cadmium telluride, for example,
6 technical analysis states that cadmium is
7 considered to be one of the six most toxic
8 chemicals known to humans. And even though it is
9 nonflammable, it decomposes amidst toxic chemicals
10 when heated.

11 With reference copper, indium,
12 gallium and selenium, the analysis states that
13 gallium is corrosive, causes severe burns and may
14 cause hemorrhaging. On selenium it states that
15 selenium is toxic and fatal if swallowed. Copper
16 may cause injury to liver, lungs, kidneys and
17 pancreas. Indium compounds may cause joint pain,
18 heart pain and general disability. And further
19 analysis concludes that special firefighting
20 equipment, including powder, needs to be used with
21 respect to firefighting these chemicals.

22 In the Forbes magazine of May 23,
23 2018, an article by Michael Shellenberger is
24 titled, If Solar Panels Were So Clean, Why Do They
25 Produce So Much Toxic Waste? Per this article,

1 there was a 2015 tornado at the solar farm called
2 Desert Sunlight in Southern California. It broke
3 200,000 solar panels. And when Hurricane Maria
4 hit Puerto Rico, the nation's second largest solar
5 farm lost the majority of its panels.

6 There are pictures in place which
7 showed the panels separating from the posts of
8 which they are mounted on. So no matter how far
9 down these posts are dug, the panels can still be
10 lifted from their mounts.

11 And of concern to this local area,
12 the Lakengren Lake community commercial scale well
13 is just a short distance from the proposed Alamo
14 project. The Forbes article goes on to state that
15 cadmium can be washed out of solar panels by rain
16 water and it's increasingly concerning to
17 environmentalists. Leaching -- I'm quoting --
18 leaching from broken panels damaged during natural
19 events, hail storms, tornados, hurricanes and
20 earthquakes and at decommissioning is a big
21 concern.

22 Weather maps show that this area, and
23 we just had recent experience of this, as a high
24 tornado prone area, you know, for this area and
25 where I live in Beaver creek and Greene County.

1 And you may be familiar with the Xenia tornado
2 from 1974 and in the '90s.

3 Also someone else stated the low
4 solar energy available to this area in Ohio. I
5 have a map, the National Renewable Energy Lab
6 shows that Ohio is second from the bottom in the
7 entire nation with respect to solar radiation.
8 And that leads me to question, I would like to see
9 the engineering analysis from Open Road on how
10 they calculate the 69.9 megawatts. You know, is
11 this peak? Is that average? Is that counted on a
12 daily basis? I haven't seen any evidence and I'd
13 like to review that data.

14 Our Congressman, Mike Turner, has
15 stated that Oregon and North Carolina have enacted
16 strict laws prohibiting the installation of solar
17 panels on high-valued farmland. And I would like
18 the Ohio Power Citing Board to seriously consider
19 the detrimental impact on farmland, the serious
20 toxic environmental problems and major health and
21 safety issues and concerns of local livestock
22 farmers and the proposed projects business model
23 in reviewing the Alamo project application. And
24 finally for the record, I'm not being paid for my
25 testimony today. Thank you very much.

1 MS. AUGOSTINI: What is your specific
2 connection to the project?

3 MR. NOTESTINE: I'm just concerned
4 for the environment and that this may grow into my
5 area and to other parts of Ohio. My family -- we
6 are out of the farming business, but we were in
7 western Ohio, but I'd be concerned for my
8 relatives up there who are still farming.

9 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Counsel,
10 do you have any comments?

11 MR. SETTINERI: No, thank you.

12 (Charlene Weist was sworn.)

13 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state your
14 name and spell your name for the record and your
15 address.

16 MS. WEIST: Charlene Weist,
17 C-H-A-R-L-E-N-E, W-E-I-S-T. I live at 9042 Cline
18 Road, Camden. It's Israel Township. Even though
19 I live in Israel Township and was at the other
20 meeting, I grew up in Gasper township. My
21 great-grandpa, my grandpa, my dad and now my
22 sister and her family have lived on the same farm.
23 Another sister lives right next to the Alamo
24 project, and I also have a niece and her family
25 that live next to the Alamo project. So it's very

1 much of a concern to me.

2 Preble County is a farming community.

3 A true farmer is a steward of the land. They want
4 to protect that. You can't go and ask the whole
5 Preble County community what do you think about
6 solar projects? We still have town people who
7 think that it's cruel to kill an animal when you
8 can go to Krogers and buy a steak. They think
9 that chocolate milk comes from brown cows. Even
10 though the farmers are fewer in numbers, we are
11 the stewards of the land. A true farmer is going
12 to protect our land. I know that my dad and the
13 neighboring farmers who are now deceased would
14 absolutely be turning over in their graves knowing
15 what is happening to the land that they left their
16 kids.

17 And they had a real good neighbor
18 policy, if your cows were out, neighbors came to
19 help you. If your barn was burning down, they
20 would go in and pull out as much equipment as they
21 can to help their neighbors. And unfortunately, a
22 few neighbors have decided to go against the
23 majority of the farmers for their own benefit. I
24 noticed on Facebook we had a commissioner posted
25 what a beautiful view that he had in his farm.

1 Okay? And my thought was, that commissioner, how
2 insensitive are you because the vast majority of
3 the farmers are against the solar panels and how
4 would you feel if that beautiful view was all of a
5 sudden thousands of solar panels?

6 We as farmers want to see the corn
7 growing up, with tassels, the green fields of
8 green beans, the waving fields of wheat, all of
9 these are products that other people use, their
10 animals, we eat. If you don't have the farmland,
11 you lose it all.

12 There's been a lot of misinformation
13 given out too. Just recently I was told that the
14 commissioners are getting \$2 million to allow this
15 to go through. They believed it. Okay? And that
16 the commissioners was going to use this money to
17 put security officers in all the Preble County
18 schools.

19 MR. AGRANOFF: Could I ask a point of
20 clarification? Which commissioners?

21 MS. WEIST: Well, the Preble County
22 Commissioners. Yeah. And so all the
23 misinformation. We talk about transparency. When
24 I hear the word transparency, it usually means you
25 are not being transparent. Okay? Open Roads will

1 not tell us who they have planned to buy the
2 leased property. They know. Is it a foreign
3 company? Who knows? They won't tell us. And
4 just to finish up, and it's just kind of humorous
5 and I apologize, I don't remember your name, but I
6 asked him at the last meeting, how are you going
7 to control the honeysuckle in the fields of the
8 solar panels? And I said, do you know what a
9 honeysuckle is? He said, well, it's just a little
10 vine that has flowers on it. Okay? Yeah, I
11 laughed too. Yeah.

12 They don't know the county. They
13 don't know the people. They came in under, didn't
14 let everyone know, giving out false information
15 and we need to stop it. The number of people who
16 are farmers, yes, there are less than the people
17 that's in town, but that doesn't mean that we
18 don't have a stronger voice. I thank you.

19 (Penny Morton was sworn.)

20 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
21 spell your name for the record.

22 MS. MORTON: Penny Morton, P-E-N-N-Y,
23 M-O-R-T-O-N. My address is 8144 Morton Drive,
24 Camden, Ohio, and I reside in Somers Township.

25 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

1 MS. MORTON: I just want to briefly
2 state for the record on a personal level, my
3 parents, Robert and Kay Sorrell reside on a farm
4 at the corner of Paint Creek Road and Antioch
5 Road. They have been on that farm for over 50
6 years. My dad farmed it for years until his
7 retirement. My nephew now farms it. He was the
8 one that brought you the tile. We need to keep
9 all fertile and rich farm ground and agriculture
10 for growing food and grain. We do not want to see
11 these solar panels in Gasper and Washington
12 Townships. We do not want to see these solar
13 panels in Preble County.

14 On behalf of my family and the
15 neighboring farming community and those properties
16 that Open Roads proposes to surround, by one side,
17 two sides, three sides, yes, three sides around
18 your home, Open Roads, you need to go. Thank you.

19 MS. AUGOSTINI: Does counsel have any
20 comments?

21 MR. SETTINERI: No.
22 (Jason Baker was sworn.)

23 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
24 spell your name.

25 MR. BAKER: My name is Jason Baker,

1 B-A-K-E-R. I am a Local 18 representative. Our
2 address is 3860 Town Boulevard, Franklin, Ohio
3 45005.

4 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

5 MR. BAKER: Good evening. My name is
6 Jason Baker. I'm a business representative with
7 the Operating Engineers Local 18. I'm here today
8 to testify in support of Alamo Solar farm proposed
9 by Alamo Solar, LLC. The operating engineers are
10 individuals who operate cranes, backhoes,
11 excavators, bulldozers and so on. The roads and
12 bridges you drive on were mostly built by members
13 of Local 18 along with our fellow union tradesmen
14 and women. The members of Local 18 also perform
15 work related to the energy industry in addition to
16 road work.

17 If approved, the men and women of
18 Local 18 could look forward to being involved in
19 another great renewable project that would help
20 pay into our benefit package as healthcare and
21 retirement and training while earning their wages.
22 The Alamo Solar farm has the potential to create
23 over 900 construction-related jobs for the State
24 of Ohio if approved. Of the construction-related
25 jobs, 297 would be a direct impact for Preble

1 County alone.

2 Approval of the solar farm would also
3 add much to the needed renewable energy sector of
4 Ohio. We encourage the OPSB to join us in
5 supporting the Alamo Solar farm and approve their
6 application. Thank you very much.

7 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Counsel?

8 MR. SETTINERI: No.

9 MS. AUGOSTINI: Just a general
10 announcement. If you are coming up to testify,
11 hold the microphone close. Thank you.

12 (Levi Moreland was sworn.)

13 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
14 spell your name and give your address.

15 MR. MORELAND: My name is Levi
16 Moreland, L-E-V-I, M-O-R-E-L-A-N-D. My address is
17 5502 Providence Middletown Road in Jackson
18 Township.

19 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Please
20 proceed.

21 MR. MORELAND: So I'm going to keep
22 this short. So I live in Jackson Township. I
23 grew up in Jackson Township. However, my family
24 distance and close both live in Gasper Township.
25 Generations. And so I have prepared a paper with

1 everything I have to say.

2 I am opposed to the creation of Alamo
3 Solar project. By turning agriculture land into a
4 solar facility, we will loose valuable, limited
5 tillable acreage of farmland. I do not need to
6 remind you that farmland is a nonrenewable
7 resource. Solar companies will tell you the land
8 can go back to agriculture, but the
9 representatives of Open Roads Renewable admitted
10 in a public meeting at the courthouse on February
11 19th that they've never experienced a solar
12 facility returning to farmland.

13 Another concern is that the decrease
14 in property values of homes and land that would
15 neighbor solar facilities. Now, this land has
16 been in my family and families connected to my
17 family for generations. So that is very important
18 to me. Also please consider that Open Roads
19 Renewables is only an installer of the solar grid.
20 They will not be running or operating or owning
21 this complex. It will be sold to another person,
22 group or organization. Wouldn't it be nice to
23 know who is in our neighborhood? Open Roads will
24 not tell us, but if their practices in Brown
25 County are an indication, they will sell the power

1 facility to foreign investors, and that is the
2 most important thing to me. Its legal limitations
3 are one thing, but doing what is right for the
4 county and for the people that live in the county
5 is important.

6 Everybody that is in support of this
7 solar grid are all benefitting with money.
8 Everybody that is in support of it are in support
9 because they benefit in some way through money.
10 And I ask that you should consider something other
11 than money in a situation in generations of people
12 that have owned the land and will continue to live
13 in the county on that land or near that land that
14 will be affected.

15 The proposed Alamo Solar facility
16 will cost our county natural resources, local
17 control and jobs. Is all of this worth the debt
18 future generations will pay due to our negligence?
19 It is not. We cannot afford the price of this
20 solar facility. That's why I'm opposed to the
21 Alamo project.

22 I'd also like to mention the fact
23 that this land, once it's changed, probably will
24 never go back to the way it was, to the way that
25 our ancestors lived and our ancestors saw it,

1 which is vastly important to me because I feel
2 that money goes away, but family and history never
3 will. So thank you.

4 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Counsel?

5 MR. SETTINERI: No.

6 (Tim Geeting was sworn.)

7 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
8 spell your name and give your address.

9 MR. GEETING: My name is Tim Geeting,
10 T-I-M, G-E-E-T-I-N-G. I live at 210 South Maple
11 Street, Eaton, Ohio, 45320, currently. I have
12 property in Gasper Township. You need a little
13 bit of history here. I was going over a plat book
14 that I have and if I'm not mistaken, there's only
15 two people that live in Gasper Township that are
16 older than me and have been paying taxes there
17 longer than me. So I want to say that I've seen a
18 lot of change in Gasper Township.

19 I remember when the City of Eaton put
20 the first landfill out there. I could stand in my
21 son's bedroom window at night and watch when they
22 brought the trash in the daytime and they'd light
23 it on fire at night and the woods would catch on
24 fire occasionally. And then along came the county
25 and put the landfill in. I didn't complain when

1 those went in. People moved into the township and
2 started businesses there. I didn't complain about
3 that. One business even had to clean out the pond
4 because they dumped chemicals into it and it
5 killed all the fish in the pond and the creek
6 there. I didn't complain about that.

7 And I've seen the township change
8 over time. I haven't seen where I think anything
9 that this project will do that will change the
10 nature of what's going on around there. The
11 ground where this goes is mostly flat, level
12 ground. You don't find too much of the wildlife
13 hanging in there. They hang in the woods. You
14 know, I don't see them on my property all that
15 much. They go across occasionally, but they can
16 go around it. There's going to be fences where
17 they can go around.

18 So I don't understand why some people
19 are objecting, especially when the one person
20 that's opposed to it had -- they rode their horses
21 onto my property and didn't even ask me if they
22 could do it. Yet they want to tell me what I can
23 do with my property now. You know, I feel as
24 though people are getting way out ahead on things
25 that aren't really true in a lot of instances.

1 They talk about dust. You can out
2 there -- I did this myself, I used to farm. In
3 the fall there's some dust from the combine that
4 you can't even see the combine running because of
5 the dust that's being generated. So any impact
6 that this business has on the environment is not
7 going to be forever. The construction won't last
8 forever. Once it's done, you know, somebody said
9 that honeysuckle, they didn't know what
10 honeysuckle was. Well, if you don't live out in
11 the country, you don't know what it is. I can
12 guarantee there won't be honeysuckle growing out
13 there because that would grow up and probably
14 shade their solar panels to begin with, so they
15 are going to keep it cut down.

16 Most of the tiles that are out there
17 now, I haven't used a clay tile or a concrete tile
18 on my property in probably 50 years. I can tell
19 you where most of the tiles are run out there.
20 When I was a kid, I saw them dig the tiles and put
21 them in on these farms. Mine is all plastic tile
22 now. So a lot of the things that are said are not
23 actual, you know. The people are getting a little
24 hysterical over things, I feel like.

25 I notice that I don't see anybody --

1 most of the people that come up here and spoke are
2 probably I'd say 30 years and younger. I can
3 remember when some of them were born. Okay? I
4 remember when most of the people -- some of the
5 people that are here -- when they moved into the
6 area. You know, so people need to realize that
7 there's going to be change. And there's always
8 going to be change and hopefully we'll have the
9 intelligence and the background to make good
10 decisions.

11 And some of these people are up here
12 testifying with third-party, like the one
13 gentleman said, that they haven't -- they just
14 took what somebody said to them as a fact, you
15 know. And we don't need that. You need to study
16 and see for yourself and not depend upon somebody
17 else telling you what's going to happen because a
18 lot of this is conjecture and it's not going to
19 happen, I don't feel like.

20 So we need to come together and look
21 at these things rationally and decide that, you
22 know, it's my property, I can do with it what I
23 want. I should have the ability to do that. I
24 shouldn't have to depend upon somebody else making
25 decisions about what I do with my property. And

1 that's all I've got to say. Thank you.

2 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Counsel?

3 MR. SETTINERI: No.

4 MS. AUGOSTINI:

5 (Jennifer Ward was sworn.)

6 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and

7 spell your name and give your address.

8 MS. WARD: Jennifer Ward,

9 J-E-N-N-I-F-E-R, W-A-R-D. My address is 418

10 Harrison Street in Troy, Ohio, Miami County. I

11 would like to say this proposed project would

12 vigorously impact from the common practice of

13 architectural (sic) production in the area. The

14 projected solar panel facility will be located on

15 approximately 720 acres of high percentage

16 tillable productive land. I am in congruence with

17 the citizens in this area. Solar panels are not a

18 Godly discerning nor wise use of land. And in

19 Genesis 1:26 God said let us make man in our image

20 after our likeness and let them have domain over

21 the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air

22 and over the cattle and over the earth and over

23 every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

24 And in Numbers 35:33, this is pertinent, you shall

25 not pollute the land in which you live, for blood

1 pollutes the land and no amendment can be made for
2 the land, for the blood that is shed in it except
3 by the blood of the one who shed it. Meaning that
4 my family as well as the farmers that are sitting
5 behind me and farmers that have not been able to
6 attend today, have put their blood sweat and tears
7 into this land. This bleeding company should be
8 held accountable for their arbitrary and wanton
9 abuse on God's country.

10 Now, the following information
11 derives from Preble County Comprehensive and
12 Economic Development Strategy and the Land Use
13 Plan, which was revised and adopted by the current
14 three commissioners of Preble County on February
15 1st, 2017. Architectural land use, the county
16 will discourage any development which conflicts
17 with our architectural (sic) productivity. This
18 preserves a way of life and its exclusively
19 cherished values. It provides a fresh, high
20 quality food at a reasonable cost close to the
21 consumer. It contributes to a stable economy by
22 providing job opportunities, income and the market
23 for the resources of production. It contributes
24 to the nation's balance of payment by providing
25 food for export. It provides reserve food

1 production capacity to meet the future needs of
2 the world. It provides wood products from
3 woodlands.

4 It maintains the quality of beauty of
5 the environment through the cleansing effect of
6 the supply oxygen by growing plants and the
7 filtering effect of plants and soil on the water
8 supply. It maintains farms, associated wildlife
9 and habitats and provides for private outdoor
10 recreational areas for camping, fishing and
11 hunting. It provides areas for recycling of solid
12 and liquid architectural (sic) waste. It protects
13 mineral resources from being preempted. It
14 provides productive privately-maintained
15 architectural (sic) open space with all its
16 accompanying environmental benefits, including air
17 and water. It protects the integrity of
18 watersheds through the control of storm runoff and
19 the sediment drainage. This underground water
20 protects recharge (sic) areas and provides the
21 buffers for the water supplies and other natural
22 areas.

23 This community wrote the plan to
24 protect farmland and the architectural (sic) way
25 of life. We made it a priority, and these solar

1 panels take away our rights as a community and a
2 lifestyle that we have prioritized. Since I do
3 not reside in this county, I am not sure why the
4 company would encroach on productive top soil to
5 implant energy in its place.

6 I concur with the neighbors, farmers,
7 landowners, rural, nonresidents who are opposed to
8 the Alamo Solar project. This aesthetically
9 pleasing, bountiful productive farmland and rural
10 area is exclusively abundant along with wildlife
11 habitat, clean water systems and woodland trails.
12 The Alamo Solar panel project would an immense
13 impact on the multitude of people, wildlife and
14 water systems.

15 I urge you to take a look at the
16 impact Open Roads Renewables will have on Preble
17 County and the adjoining counties. I'm asking the
18 Ohio Citing Board to deny the decision of the
19 Alamo Solar project. I appreciate the opportunity
20 to voice my concerns.

21 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Counsel?

22 MR. SETTINER: No.

23 (Brandon Miller was sworn.)

24 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
25 spell your name and give your address.

1 MR. MILLER: Brandon Miller,
2 B-R-A-N-D-O-N, M-I-L-L-E-R, and I currently reside
3 in Lanier Township.

4 MR. AGRANOFF: What's your address,
5 sir?

6 MR. MILLER: I wish not to say.

7 MR. AGRANOFF: Okay.

8 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Please
9 proceed.

10 MR. MILLER: I'm a friend of a couple
11 who actually live on a four-acres piece of land on
12 Consolidated Road. They are very much opposed to
13 the Alamo Solar project. There will be a field of
14 solar panels built on the land directly across
15 from their home. There have been comments made
16 such as everyone is for greener energy until it is
17 put in their backyard and also comments such as
18 the farmland owners have the right to do what they
19 want with their land, but who honestly wants an
20 industrial site built right across the road from
21 the home where they live?

22 We are not just talking about your
23 neighbor erecting a couple of solar panels for
24 their own use. This will be a field of hundreds
25 of glass panels. Does a landowner still have the

1 right to build something on their property that
2 will adversely affect their neighbor's property in
3 many ways? Does that landowner have the right to
4 adversely affect their neighbor's property value
5 while they gain hundreds of thousands of dollars?
6 I can tell you this does not sit well with them.

7 As property owners they have rights also.

8 Decisions made today will affect
9 Preble County for the remainder of our lives.
10 There will be no turning back, so think about
11 that.

12 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Counsel?

13 MR. SETTINERI: No.

14 (Lynn Hans was sworn.)

15 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
16 spell your name and give your address.

17 MR. HANS: Lynn Hans, L-Y-N-N,
18 H-A-N-S, 2196 Gasper Road, Eaton, Ohio, 45320.

19 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Which
20 township?

21 MR. HANS: Gasper Township. I have
22 been a resident for all but five years of Gasper
23 Township. I've farmed all my life. It's the only
24 thing I've ever done. I'm a third-generation
25 farmer. I've watched the community around me, a

1 gated community, Lakengren, grow beside me to
2 hundreds of homes. The way I look at it, it takes
3 power to furnish to all these homes. And when I
4 first got into this, I decided that, well, this
5 was the greenest energy way to supply power to
6 these homes.

7 I realized this power may not go to
8 all of these homes, but still, the power has to go
9 somewhere and the power for these homes has to
10 come from somewhere. They've been closing coal
11 plants down left and right and we need our power
12 from somewhere. I've been a strong supporter of
13 FFA and 4H all my life and other community
14 projects, and I'm in support of this solar
15 project. Thank you.

16 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Counsel?

17 MR. SETTINERI: No.

18 (Cheyenne Baker was sworn.)

19 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
20 spell your name and give your address.

21 MS. BAKER: Cheyenne Baker,
22 C-H-E-Y-E-N-N-E, B-A-K-E-R. I live on 3239 Jordan
23 Road, West Alexandria, Ohio 45381.

24 MS. AUGOSTINI: What county?

25 MS. BAKER: Preble, Twin Township.

1 I'm here to speak in opposition to the proposed
2 solar power project named Alamo I. I want to
3 emphasize the project is called Alamo I and its
4 name leads me to believe this is just the first
5 phase Open Roads Renewables has for the Alamo
6 project. How many phases will there be? Alamo
7 II, Allamo III, Alamo IV?

8 I want you to also consider that just
9 six miles away from the Alamo I project is the
10 area for another proposed solar facility by Open
11 Roads, namely Angelina I. Again, the name implies
12 that there will be an Angelina II, III and IV. My
13 concern is Open Roads will eventually connect the
14 Alamo projects to the Angelina project and our
15 county will end up with thousands of acres in
16 solar panels. Thousand of acres that currently
17 feed the world and drives the economy of our
18 county with the production.

19 If you think that's unlikely, let me
20 tell you about Highland and Brown County in
21 Southern Ohio. Within the two neighboring
22 counties, four solar projects have come before the
23 Ohio Power Citing Board. Three cases, Hillcrest
24 Solar, Willowbrook Solar and Highland Solar have
25 already been approved and the other, Nestlewood

1 Solar is pending approval.

2 The solar developers in these
3 adjoining counties continue to obtain land for
4 future solar plants within that area, which will
5 bring the total acres involved into about 10,000
6 acres within the two counties. Of course the
7 10,000 acres have not been approved as one
8 project. 1800 acres here, 3400 acres there,
9 another 1900 over there, et cetera. But it will
10 total about 10,000 acres. Try to visualize 10,000
11 acres. It's nearly impossible.

12 Mark Parton, a resident of Highland
13 County stated that he can start at one end of the
14 land going into solar and drive 15 minutes before
15 he gets to the end of solar projects. A 15-minute
16 country drive passes a lot of farmland, about
17 10,000 acres worth. Those 10,000 acres will no
18 longer feed people. Will Preble County become
19 like those counties taking 10,000 acres of
20 agriculture land out of the production in Preble
21 County? It would leave a ripple effect on our
22 area's economy.

23 Agriculture doesn't just affect
24 farmers. Preble County seed dealers, fertilizer
25 dealers, truck drivers, grain elevator operators,

1 equipment dealers, feed companies, banking and
2 credit services, plus all those employed by those
3 agricultural productivity businesses will feel the
4 repercussions of losing agriculture land.

5 I fear a large expansion for the
6 Alamo and Angelina projects. The powers at the
7 state level are looking at these projects
8 individually case by case and not seeing the big
9 picture. I'm asking the Ohio Power Citing Board
10 to recognize the big picture and take notice of
11 what may be coming down the road in Preble County
12 and get it stopped now. Thank you.

13 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

14 (Lakota Bradly was sworn.)

15 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
16 spell your name and give your address.

17 MS. BRADLY: I'm Lakota Bradly,
18 L-A-K-O-T-A, B-R-A-D-L-Y. I live at 6325 U.S.
19 Route 35 East, West Alexandria, Ohio, Twin
20 Township. I would like to speak this evening
21 about green energy and its important byproduct on
22 business and citizens of this nation. We are
23 concerned about the availability of our world as
24 we try to find a green energy source that is
25 self-sustaining. Unfortunately, solar energy is

1 not self-sustaining energy and the importance of
2 this industry can best be measured by government
3 subsidies.

4 Although the energy we receive from
5 solar is a renewal energy source, it is not
6 self-sustaining. Power from the solar facilities
7 must rely on nonrenewal energy sources to provide
8 energy when the sun does not shine, which in Ohio
9 is pretty often. Even as we attempt to make solar
10 a main energy source, we'll continue to have to
11 rely on coal and other energy sources to make
12 solar viable. In other words, solar is only
13 sustainable through the use of nonrenewable
14 energy.

15 Gary Freeman, director of Renewal
16 Energy Compliance, an organization for Duke Energy
17 has stated, solar power's generation peak too
18 early in summer and too late in winter to meet
19 peak customer demand. Solar power is not to be
20 end all energy source needed to save our planet.
21 It can't fully function without relying on other
22 types of energy. Solar power cannot support
23 itself as an energy source. It cannot support
24 itself as an independent industry either.

25 According to North Carolina State

1 University professor, Herbert Eckerlin, a former
2 power company official, states that solar is a
3 government-created industry and is supported by
4 the backs of the taxpayers. In fact, federal
5 subsite for renewable energy totals over seven
6 billion in fiscal year 2016.

7 According to the data from the U.S.
8 Energy Information Administration renewable energy
9 received 93 percent of federal energy fuel
10 subsidies, but only generated 22 percent of the
11 total U.S. energy in 2016.

12 This is not officially a sound
13 decision by our politicians. Taxpayers should not
14 be happy with a 22 percent return on a 93 percent
15 investment. The previous subsidies don't include
16 state or local subsidies, mandates or incentives.
17 According to the Institute For Energy Research,
18 three-fifths of the state have mandated the levels
19 of renewal energy production. The incentives that
20 many states provide are the result of lobbying for
21 renewing energy. And example of this incentive is
22 Ohio pilots program of which Alamo plans to take
23 advantage.

24 Because of government subsidies, very
25 little cash is needed for companies to get rich.

1 Our state and federal tax money is being used to
2 make solar investors millionaires because of the
3 new tax breaks for solar energy. Professor
4 Eckerlin believes that new legislation is needed
5 to shift the cost for solar projects from
6 taxpayers to solar developers.

7 Even though solar is a
8 government-supported industry, solar companies
9 struggle to remain solvent. Within the last three
10 years, the solar companies Sungivitol (sic),
11 Beamreach, Suedison, Yingli Green Energy, Solar
12 One and Solyndra have gone bankrupt. Will Open
13 Roads Renewable, a three-year-old company, follow
14 suit? If so, who will pay for this compromising
15 of the solar facilities they created.

16 Our county commissioners cannot
17 afford to put more than two sheriff deputies on
18 patrol at a time. How will they find money to
19 clean up a toxic solar field? It will be left to
20 the taxpayers in Preble County to deal with
21 cleaning up 1,000 acres.

22 I conclude tonight with saying that
23 the only thing green about solar energy is the
24 money that is handed to the industry by our
25 politicians through government subsidies. Because

1 of this, I will not support a solar facility in
2 Preble County.

3 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

4 (Richard Buehner was sworn.)

5 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
6 spell your name and give your address.

7 MR. BUEHNER: Richard C. Buehner,
8 R-I-C-H-A-R-D, B-U-E-H-N-E-R, Gasper Township,
9 1553 Antioch Road, Eaton, Ohio.

10 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please proceed.

11 MR. BUEHNER: Okay. My name is
12 Richard Buehner. My wife and I Jan attended the
13 Angelina Solar project public meeting a month ago.
14 We listened to all the testimony very closely.
15 There were several excellent speakers with a lot
16 of very interesting information. All that
17 information didn't change my mind. We are still
18 100 percent in favor of turning part of our farm
19 in Gasper Township into a solar farm.

20 Yes, my property is a part of this
21 project, but I would still be in favor of a solar
22 project, even if my farm was not eligible. The
23 reason that I am is because, whether we agree on
24 the science behind climate change, we need sources
25 of energy from renewable sources such as wind and

1 solar. We have God-given sunshine and we can
2 transform it into clean and renewable energy.

3 I have been involved in agriculture
4 my entire life. My family moved to a farm in
5 Gasper Township in 1964. Growing up on the farm,
6 I learned hard work, long hours and hardship. My
7 dad was threatened with bankruptcy for many years,
8 so my siblings and I grew up extremely poor. But
9 I learned a valuable life lesson, I will not go --
10 I was not going to live my adult life the same way
11 I grew up.

12 Shortly after high school I met the
13 girl of my life and we married two years later.
14 Prior to our marriage, I realized I could not
15 support a family farming, so I took an after-farm
16 job and continued to help the family farm. Our
17 neighbor, an elderly woman named Lesley Brown, who
18 I checked in on daily, wanted me to have her 50
19 acre farm in 1980. I struggled to get the loan
20 approved, but managed with the help of a local
21 banker.

22 For those of you old enough to know
23 what happened in the early '80s, land values
24 declined significantly. Interest rates hit 13
25 plus percent and banks wanted their money back.

1 Many farmers over the next few years lost their
2 farms, including my dad.

3 My wife and I made a lot of good
4 decisions and busted our ass to keep our farm. I
5 now are lived on Antioch Road for 55 years and I
6 have farmed some of the same land since I was four
7 years old. I have always taken care of and
8 respected the land the good Lord left us and I
9 would never do anything to permanently damage this
10 land.

11 I have heard all the pros and cons on
12 this topic, so I'm going to save a bunch of time
13 and not repeat everything all over again. Farming
14 is a business and I run it as a business. The
15 goal of a business is to make money and grow. If
16 you are not making money and you are not growing
17 your business, it's dying. As a farmer, I'm
18 always looking for ways to diversify.

19 After this past harvest extending
20 into spring and planting season gone so poorly,
21 our potential yields have already been cut
22 drastically and the corn crop being planted so
23 late, every single bushel will need to be
24 mechanically dried, costing even more dollars on a
25 very possible less than average yield. This to me

1 makes solar panels look even more attractive.

2 My wife and I and our two sons have
3 spent hundreds of hours coming to this decision.
4 We have done a lot of research. We hired an
5 attorney who is a farmer specializing in
6 agriculture and has done extensive work in energy.
7 We are both approaching retirement age and our
8 goal is to pass our farm on to our sons and
9 grandsons. Our sons understand that I want to
10 look back from wherever I am in the year 2080 and
11 see a Century sign farm hanging on our farm. We
12 have worked extremely hard for our land, so now is
13 the opportunity for our land to work for us.
14 Thank you.

15 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

16 (Ami Stevenson was sworn.)

17 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
18 spell your name and give your address.

19 MS. STEVENSON: My name Ami
20 Stevenson, A-M-I, S-T-E-V-E-N-S-O-N. I live at
21 1814 West Consolidated Road, Eaton, Ohio. I'm
22 also the guardian for my father-in-law who resides
23 on 784 Mann Road, Eaton, Ohio, both are in Gasper
24 Township. I'm an employee of Preble Shawnee Local
25 Schools, but I'm here on behalf of myself

1 personally and I do not represent Preble Shawnee
2 schools. I reside within the Eaton school
3 district as well.

4 Several years ago my property was
5 involved with a different energy provider project.
6 We were contacted, a negotiated plan was agreed
7 upon using a neutral attorney and it was signed,
8 sealed and delivered. Several weeks into the
9 project I noticed that the specifications on my
10 plan were not matching those that were taking
11 place down and across the road.

12 I started to contact the attorney to
13 try to figure out what was going on. It took me
14 several times, six exactly to get a first phone
15 call back. Oh, they are just making some changes,
16 he said. Don't be worried about it. It's all on
17 course.

18 Several more weeks went by until one
19 day I came home and I have a tree company in my
20 yard taking down trees that I'm not aware of are
21 going to be happening. That was not part of our
22 plan. Needless to say, this was the start of a
23 very heated discussion with the company that we
24 had an agreement on. Basically what we were told
25 was things happen, plans change and we are the

1 ones who have the right to make those decisions
2 based on the needs that we have.

3 I currently have an 80-foot pillar 25
4 paces from my front door, not on my property line,
5 but daggone as close as it could get to my
6 property line. It doesn't affect the landowners
7 because it's as close to my house as possible.
8 Unfortunately, this previous situation has created
9 a complete lack of trust for this current project.

10 My experience is we were told what we
11 wanted to hear, yet they had all intentions of
12 doing exactly what they wanted to do, regardless
13 of what our thoughts and feelings were. It took
14 several phone calls and finally a phone call to a
15 commissioner, who at the time was Mr. Steve
16 Wesler. He was the only person who was able to
17 make meetings for us to come to some kind of
18 agreement as to what was going to happen.

19 With that being said, it is very
20 difficult for me to believe that the things that
21 people have been told are truthful. I've seen
22 with my own eyes and experienced with my own
23 property the things that we were told that
24 absolutely did not happen. No, it wasn't solar
25 panels and my property isn't very big, but the

1 point is, I work very hard for what I have. It is
2 mine and I am the one who has to deal with this
3 pole outside my house and will for the extension
4 of however long I live there. We were told, oh,
5 it will never be hit by lightening, it's grounded.
6 It's been hit twice. One time so hard that the
7 elderly neighbor next door thought her house
8 exploded.

9 Unfortunately, my previous experience
10 lends me to not be a believer for the Open Roads.
11 I'm not directly involved -- my property is not
12 directly involved, but my father-in-law's is. He
13 is an elderly gentlemen who has retired and come
14 back here because his wife was ill and this is the
15 only thing that he has. I'm concerned regarding
16 money and how it will be shared amongst the school
17 districts, specifically Preble Shawnee, Eaton City
18 Schools, Gasper Township and Washington Township.
19 In looking at the application, there's no real
20 clear breakdown of how this will take place.

21 After talking with Shelly Wilson, the
22 executive administrator for the Tax Equation
23 Division, she made it clear that there is
24 currently no provision for a mandatory payment for
25 the solar projects installed after December 31,

1 2016. It is currently 2019.

2 If the commissioners decide to go to
3 the max discretion payment, that money will be put
4 into the general fund. The general fund funds
5 things like the engineering office, the Sheriff's
6 Department and Children's Services. At this time
7 the general fund may not gift to townships or
8 school districts any of that money. So how do the
9 school districts -- how are the school districts
10 going to benefit? That is a huge concern that I
11 have considering that I'm a teacher, that's where
12 my income comes from.

13 Secondly, there's a fixed sum levy
14 such as school district, emergency levies and bond
15 issues that are guaranteed to raise a fixed sum
16 revenue every year. When taxable value is
17 exempted, which is what will happen with the land
18 that the solar panels are on, the revenue raised
19 by fix sum levy remains stable by increasing the
20 rate of that levy. So the remaining taxpayers are
21 the ones who are going to have to come up with
22 that difference. Someone like my father-in-law,
23 who is on a very fixed income would be greatly
24 hurt by this transaction.

25 My last concern is the fact that I

1 keep hearing that it's going to create local
2 income tax in our county. There is no local
3 income tax in Washington or Gasper Townships. If
4 the construction workers for Alamo were to live in
5 the municipality of Preble County, they would be
6 subject to that income tax. However, if that they
7 live in a township of Preble County or outside of
8 Preble County, there's no entity in the Preble
9 County that would benefit from the income tax
10 dollars during construction or operation.

11 Considering the uncertainty of the
12 real revenue coming into our community, my family
13 has discussed this many hours and we are opposed
14 to the Alamo Solar facility. Thank you.

15 MS. AUGOSTINI: Counsel?

16 MR. SETTINERI: No.

17 (Samuel D. Borst was sworn.)

18 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
19 spell your name and give your address.

20 MR. BORST: My name is Samuel D.
21 Morris. I live at 3247 Camden Road, Eaton, Ohio.
22 I live in Gasper Township. Thank you. I'm a
23 local lawyer of 30 years and my 30-plus acre
24 property is slated to be included in the Alamo
25 Solar project. I live on that property, unlike

1 many of the people who want to complain and either
2 aren't directly affected or have developed their
3 own former property the way they saw fit,
4 including developing it into residential real
5 estate. I didn't complain when they developed
6 their property in the way they saw fit, because it
7 wasn't my place to do so.

8 You don't seem to see any of the
9 farmers in the project complaining about the use
10 of their property at all. And unlike many of the
11 people that complain, my property, which was
12 always the combined conservation project with CRP
13 prairie grass for wildlife cover and crops, will
14 stay a farm with twice as much CRP prairie grass
15 on it as before, preserving the soil and providing
16 benefits to wildlife even more.

17 One of the reasons I didn't complain
18 is because I knew that I was moving. When I moved
19 here in 2015 to one of the most developed areas of
20 Preble County. When I moved here Lakengren gated
21 community is and was one of the largest developed
22 subdivisions of residential real estate in Preble
23 County, about a mile from the project.

24 You will notice that some of the
25 addresses on the petition to intervene are

1 actually located in Lakengren. And when I was
2 chief ranger at Hueston Woods in Preble County in
3 the early '80s, I saw that Lakengren at that time
4 was comprised of camping trailers mostly and not
5 homes. It has been developed in that 30-plus year
6 period to a subdivision with \$400,000 homes in it.
7 I also knew when I moved here in 2015 that I was
8 only two and a half miles from the corporation
9 limit of the City of Eaton, which I also expected
10 would grow and expand.

11 The Alamo Solar project is merely
12 part of the expected progress and that almost all
13 the families in the project area saw it coming, as
14 well as those who bought residential real estate
15 in what I consider a combined residential farm
16 area and they should have expected that progress
17 as well. When they moved in, they saw one of the
18 biggest polluters in the county, which was the
19 Preble County landfill, also about a mile from
20 this project. So if they were worried about
21 leaching, worried about environmental impact, they
22 shouldn't have moved that close to the landfill.

23 Some of these people that are
24 complaining are part of that same development. So
25 to attempt to stand in the way of farmers

1 attempting to farm their ground in a progressive
2 green energy way, I feel just makes them stand out
3 like sore thumbs and hypocrites, when we didn't
4 stand in the way of them developing their land to
5 their benefit.

6 For me, I intend to retire in Preble
7 County. I can look at the quiet outdoors. My
8 background is in OD&R and my education in
9 undergrad was in natural resources. I like the
10 quiet outdoors and low traffic on the roads near
11 me. Those things won't change once construction
12 of the project is finished. There's very few
13 people that drive down those roads to even see
14 this project.

15 The solar panels stand about ten feet
16 tall at their peak, like corn does presently when
17 it's mature. And for those people that don't want
18 to see the project, conifer buffers will make it
19 impossible to see it, to those who want to
20 complain.

21 You will see that many of the farmers
22 in the project area are up in years of retirement
23 age or close thereto, like me. This project gives
24 them a chance to supplement their income or to
25 actually afford to retire from farming and still

1 keep the farm in their name to pass on to the next
2 generation, as we've heard from other people. And
3 what we found about our next generation, my son
4 included, is they don't intend on farming. And
5 many of them that might come back to that land,
6 instead of farming, they may develop it into
7 residential real estate themselves, if it's not
8 preserved in this fashion.

9 I fully support the project and am
10 looking forward to the tax dollars it generates
11 for Preble County and for the benefits to the
12 schools, roads, first responder programs that most
13 of the people that are complaining will also
14 benefit from. Thank you.

15 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

16 (John Winter was sworn.)

17 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
18 spell your name and give your address.

19 MR. WINTER: John Winter, J-O-H-N,
20 W-I-N-T-E-R. My address is 6601 Wayne Trace Road
21 in Summerville, Ohio, 45064.

22 MR. AGRANOFF: Which township?

23 MR. WINTER: That is not within the
24 listed townships.

25 MR. AGRANOFF: Thank you.

1 MR. WINTER: I reside on a farm in
2 Butler County, but I have family that will be
3 affected by the Alamo project. I was raised on a
4 farm, as were both of my parents. My family is
5 one example of many in this region. Agriculture
6 is an integral part of our lives and the local
7 economy. An introduction of a solar farm would be
8 a drastic change to the local landscape. It goes
9 without saying that it will impact the people on
10 and near the proposed site.

11 As a recent graduate of Miami
12 University about to start my career in
13 engineering, I have my vision set towards the
14 future. So I ask, what would this proposed solar
15 farm mean for the future of Preble County? First
16 and foremost, Preble County would loose 1,000
17 acres of farmland currently used in agricultural
18 production. With approval of the project, this
19 number is likely to grow much larger. This
20 concerns me especially because the land is being
21 taken under our noses without the time and
22 research necessary to make a smart, informed
23 decision.

24 The project also does not provide
25 direct benefits to the local community. There has

1 been no promise to hire locally to construct the
2 solar farm. Once operational, the electricity
3 produced by the solar farm would be transmitted
4 out of state. Why would a solar farm be erected
5 in Ohio, a state known to have an overall lack of
6 continuous sunshine to transmit electricity to
7 somewhere else that likely has more sunshine? I
8 find that baffling.

9 The only benefit this project
10 supports to Preble County is an annual monetary
11 payment in lieu of taxes. Mind you, this amount
12 continues to drop as new reports are published and
13 it is a flat rate for the lifetime of the solar
14 farm. This is a bad deal.

15 This would be a different discussion
16 if the proposed solar farm was produced by this
17 community for this community. However, Open Roads
18 Renewable is encroaching on our farmland without
19 providing the benefits that a solar farm could
20 bring to this community. Somebody else will get
21 renewable energy while we would get the solar
22 panels placed on our precious farmed land. What
23 have we done to deserve this?

24 This land is being used to produce
25 food for people and livestock and the money stays

1 local. Open Roads Renewable wants to invade this
2 productive farmland and taint our local landscape
3 for the benefit of someone else.

4 In regards to the representation of
5 the younger generation, please understand that we
6 are speaking tonight out of concern for our
7 futures. We will be the ones still living in 40
8 years and responsible for cleaning it up. We are
9 the future property owners. For these reasons,
10 I'm opposed to a solar farm being installed in
11 Preble County. Thank you.

12 MS. AUGOSTINI: Counsel?

13 MR. SETTINERI: No.

14 (Teresa Crim was sworn.)

15 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
16 spell your name and give your address.

17 MS. CRIM: My name is Teresa Crim,
18 T-E-R-E-S-A, C-R-I-M. I live at 8900 Shule Road
19 in Gratis Township. First, I'd like to thank you
20 all for listening to our opinions and allowing us
21 this moment to tell you what our feelings are.
22 I'm a public educator and a resident of Preble
23 County. I want to address the monetary impact
24 that I see these solar arrays will have on
25 budgets, not of the state or the county

1 governments, but instead of the people who have
2 chosen to live and build their homes and their
3 families here. We are talking about farmers,
4 teachers, factory workers, small business owners.
5 These people who are at the mercy of your decision
6 will feel the environmental changes and the impact
7 on their income and then possibly be saddled with
8 a higher tax bill to keep their children's school
9 or county agencies running appropriately.

10 If Open Roads Renewable is allowed
11 payment in lieu of taxes, known as PILOT, instead
12 of property and utility taxes, which seems to be
13 the current plan, the county will have a definite
14 amount of money to budget and plan from. Right
15 now, to the county that guaranteed income sounds
16 pretty good. However, as we are all aware, tax
17 bases and rates change over time. This makes me
18 ponder what the future might bring. Will the
19 agreed-upon payment be enough to continually match
20 the utility and property taxes that would have
21 been brought in?

22 Taxes increase and Open Roads
23 Renewable is allowed to play a flat rate for 20,
24 30, 40 years. Chances are those funds will not
25 even out over the length of the agreement. What

1 would this mean? This would mean that the
2 agencies who are often dependent on the tax base,
3 like schools, will need to seek new funding. And
4 this will come in the form of tax levies. The
5 PILOT program will protect the Open Roads
6 Renewable from most of these new requests and the
7 land that they are using will be removed from the
8 taxes, which means the cost of these new levies
9 will be spread over less land and amongst everyone
10 in the county.

11 Who will be affected by these tax
12 increases? The everyday taxpayer, the other tax
13 paying businesses in Preble County. Let that sink
14 in a moment. As residences and property and
15 business owners, we will continue to pay increased
16 taxes while Open Roads Renewable safely will
17 budget their PILOT from a faraway place and bring
18 in their profits.

19 Since a PILOT in my understanding
20 does not have to be distributed in the same manner
21 as property tax or utility tax, the public agency
22 as much as schools and other public services who
23 benefit from those taxes will lack funds. So
24 basically while the county budget could find
25 stability from the PILOT agreement, the residents

1 may be looking at much more money paid out of
2 their personal funds than they are taking in.
3 This will create instability for those who live
4 here. This could impact whether or not people
5 choose to live here, come to live here or bring
6 their businesses here.

7 What happens to our community then?
8 I can tell you. It will likely not be good. I
9 have seen as a teacher what happens when
10 communities are financially strapped. Much of
11 Preble County's income comes from its rich land.
12 I completely understand why Open Roads Renewable
13 would like a piece of that profit. However, they
14 should be held to the same standard as every other
15 property owner and utility.

16 Alamo and Open Roads don't want to
17 pay, so I don't want to pay for them and they
18 should find another place to play. I beseech you
19 to deny the Alamo project application.

20 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

21 (Rachel Smith was sworn.)

22 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
23 spell your name and give your address.

24 MS. SMITH: I'm Rachel Smith. My
25 address is 828 Brandy Drive, that's in Eaton,

1 Ohio, and Gasper Township. The solar plant is
2 proposed to be placed very close to the Lakengren
3 gated community's back gate, which my home happens
4 to sit very close to. I travel Paint Creek and
5 Consolidated Road almost every day, if not
6 multiple times a day. I'm concerned about the
7 potential glare and any other negative effects
8 that this might have on our community, causing
9 accidents on an already dangerous road especially
10 in the winter.

11 I'm also concerned, you know, about
12 the hazardous chemicals that everyone mentioned.
13 We are on a lake. I've been swimming in the lake
14 since I was a little girl and don't really want to
15 see anything happen to that, you know. Like
16 people have said, the panels can break and release
17 those chemicals and where are they to end up?
18 Whose responsibility will that be if that ever
19 does happen?

20 My grandpa has owned property at
21 Lakengren for over 40 years. I'm a
22 third-generation property owner at Lakengren. I'd
23 like to see it surrounded by farmland for the next
24 40 years.

25 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

1 (Thomas Angst was sworn.)

2 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
3 spell your name and give your address.

4 MR. ANGST: Thomas Angst, A-N-G-S-T,
5 address is 3279 East Taylor School Road, Hamilton,
6 Ohio. That's in Butler County.

7 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please proceed.

8 MR. ANGST: Okay. I was approached
9 -- first, let me give you background. I spent 33
10 plus years in the fire service and individuals
11 that I go to church with are friends with the
12 local fire departments that this will effect. And
13 they came to me and asked me if I knew of any what
14 we call emergency response plans. And I did not.
15 I contacted people I worked with, because I don't
16 know of any local solar fields here.

17 The only one I could find was from
18 San Francisco Fire Department and it was several
19 pages long. But in a nutshell, it basically said
20 if you have an incident there such as a fire,
21 secure the scene, notify the owner and stay out.

22 I also currently do fire
23 investigation and I called a colleague and talked
24 to him, who has investigated three solar panel
25 fires on top of Walmart stores. And what he told

1 me was there is no way to shut off the solar
2 panel. As long as it has light available to it,
3 it will produce electricity, which is a hazard if
4 there is a fire. They were able to shut off a
5 panel. They got a heavy duty tarp and covered it,
6 was the only way they could get it to stop
7 producing electricity. They couldn't even get it
8 to energize with a flashlight.

9 He also contacted an engineer with
10 Tesla who apparently makes parts for solar panels
11 and he was interested in the possibility of
12 getting solar panels for his home. By the time he
13 got into it, he found out that at least
14 residential solar panels, they lose efficiency,
15 about six percent efficiency a year and after ten
16 years they need to be replaced, which is about the
17 time you recoup your losses or the amount of money
18 that you've spent on the solar panels. And so
19 based on all that information, he decided that
20 solar panels were not for him. And it appears to
21 me that based on the research that I was able to
22 find out about emergency response plans, that the
23 local volunteer fire departments would be woefully
24 undermanned, underfunded and under-equipped to
25 handle any type of emergency. Thank you.

1 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

2 (Adam Groh was sworn.)

3 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
4 spell your name and give your address.

5 MR. GROH: My name is Adam Groh, 2598
6 Miller-Williams Road, Eaton, Ohio and I reside in
7 Washington Township.

8 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Please
9 proceed.

10 MR. GROH: Our family is one of the
11 few that have expressed interest in the solar
12 facilities. Although nothing is guaranteed, the
13 solar projects I believe could provide alternative
14 income sources to the interested families
15 interested in these proposed sites. Lower crop
16 prices due to oversupply and global competition
17 have contributed to the fact that it takes larger
18 farms to produce income similar to smaller farms
19 in the past. That combined with equipment inputs,
20 land cost and you will realize that profit margins
21 just aren't what they used to be.

22 While many see the potential loss of
23 local farmland, what you won't hear or see is
24 increasing amounts of farmland coming into
25 production all across the world. When a local

1 grainery merchant tells you that grain can be
2 shipped to a hog farm in North Carolina at a lower
3 cost from South America than from the midwest,
4 then you will realize that America is in a global
5 market.

6 Expressing an interest in solar sites
7 is just another way of diversifying the income
8 portfolios of families that have worked hard for
9 many years in order to purchase the land. When it
10 comes to risks, families expressing interest in
11 the solar sites such as ours are assuming the
12 greatest risk I believe. We do not want to see
13 any devaluation of the assets we've worked many
14 years for. It would be more of a responsibility
15 upon us to keep constant surveillance and
16 maintenance checks on the proposed sites than ever
17 before, not only for our assets but for the
18 benefits of neighboring landowners as well.

19 When it comes to construction,
20 drainage, appearance or taxes, we do not want our
21 decisions to affect the livelihood of adjoining
22 landowners who have declined or are opposed to the
23 project. In no way, shape or form do we want our
24 decisions to negatively affect neighboring
25 landowners uninterested in the proposed sites.

1 I believe the proposed solar farms
2 could also be a great asset to the local
3 businesses and school communities as well. Tax
4 revenues generated from these sites would benefit
5 our local governments and school communities
6 allowing for updated infrastructure as well as the
7 possibility of providing higher wages to attract
8 talented teachers and school personnel.

9 Not many people have brought up the
10 fact that one of our most prominent local high
11 tech businesses located literally down the road
12 from us as we speak manufactures and supplies
13 components used in the production of solar panels.
14 If nothing other than electricity generation
15 stations and an end user of locally-produced
16 products, these solar farms can serve as a useful
17 research and development station for products
18 produced locally by Silfex and other local
19 businesses. Thank you.

20 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you.

21 (Nancy Groh was sworn.)

22 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
23 spell your name and give your address.

24 MS. GROH: My name is Nancy Groh,
25 2523 Somers Gratis Road in Camden, and I'm in

1 Summers Township, but our farms -- we're
2 landowners of farms in Gasper Township.

3 Okay. I'm Nancy Groh and on behalf
4 of my husband we are in favor of this project. It
5 is a clean, renewable source of energy. The solar
6 farms will have the capacity to generate up to
7 69.9 megawatts of electricity for this region. It
8 does not create any air pollution, water pollution
9 or waste. It will create enough clean energy to
10 power the equivalent of 15,000 average Ohio homes.

11 Right now the acreage on these
12 projects pay county \$100,000 a year between both
13 projects. With projects, it will pay 1 million
14 375 a year. That's almost 1.2 million more in tax
15 revenue every year. Alamo is a win for school and
16 long-term predictable income for county and
17 townships. Alamo will plant grass and it will be
18 like it's in the CRP program for 35 years. Will
19 improve well water and ground water due to the
20 fact that there will be no fertilizing and turning
21 dirt multiple times a year, no runoff in the water
22 of nitrogen and chemicals.

23 Right now it's taking one-half or one
24 percent of Preble County farmland that's going to
25 produce solar. Basically the project is good for

1 the economy and it's good for the environment.

2 That's all.

3 MS. AUGOSTINI: I have one question
4 for you. So that dollar amount that you cited,
5 the \$1.2 million, was that for the entire project
6 site per year?

7 MS. GROH: Yes.

8 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. And last
9 but not least, Andrew Groh.

10 (Andrew Groh was sworn.)

11 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
12 spell your name and give your address.

13 MR. GROH: My name is Andrew Groh,
14 A-N-D-R-E-W, G-R-O-H. My address is 1350 Somers
15 Gratis Road, Camden, Ohio, Preble County, Somers
16 Township.

17 I don't have a real big speech to
18 make. There's a few points that I would like to
19 address, one being the tile issue. We farmed it
20 ever since -- I was born farming and tile, the way
21 it works is normally it drains to your lowest
22 point of your property or across properties to the
23 lowest point. Therefore, it creates pressure. So
24 a lot of people are having tile issues uphill, it
25 would create pressure on the ground that is

1 affected with the solar, whereas, that would be
2 like most of our property is on the downhill side.
3 So we would be worried about it more than the
4 uphill because it would be creating a problem for
5 our sake on our ground. Therefore, we would
6 address that being our property.

7 I am in support of the Alamo project
8 and, I mean, we all love farming that's in this
9 project and it's another way to produce off the
10 sunlight with the solar panels. Thank you.

11 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Is there
12 anybody else that would like to testify?

13 (Gene Wyatt was sworn.)

14 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
15 spell your name and give your address.

16 MR. WYATT: My name is Gene Wyatt.
17 I'm from Union County, Liberty, Indiana, 6625
18 South Snowdon Road.

19 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please proceed.

20 MR. WYATT: I moved to the country
21 because I wanted to get away from the concrete
22 city. I'm a truck driver by trade, a mechanic and
23 I also do a little farming on my own. If I wanted
24 to move to the concrete city, I would move back.
25 I have hauled all kinds of material to job sites

1 and all of them give you big promises. And many
2 of them say, oh, we will create jobs for you here
3 in your hometown. It doesn't happen. I've seen
4 it too many times.

5 All these new schools that were built
6 were mainly built out of guys out of West
7 Virginia. Nobody in Ohio, nobody in Indiana.
8 They was all out of West Virginia shipped over
9 here. Same way with the oil fields in Ohio. They
10 are all shipped out of Pennsylvania and West
11 Virginia. So to sit here and say that it will
12 bring jobs in here is foolish. They will get bids
13 from people and they will ship people in.

14 I was on the job of the windmill
15 stuff here in Indiana and Ohio. None of those
16 guys were from Ohio. I live in Indiana. I was
17 one that was hauling to them. The same with all
18 the schools that were built across the U.S. I
19 went from Illinois all the way clean over to the
20 east coast up and down the coast. I'm from Ohio
21 and Indiana. And nobody guaranteed a truck driver
22 in that area to haul anything.

23 All the brick that come to this side
24 come out of North Carolina. Why didn't they hire
25 guys out of North Carolina or vice-versa, wherever

1 the materials come from? So to sit here and say
2 that, you know, that that stuff is going to create
3 jobs in your community is bull.

4 Number two, we talked about the land.
5 We're to take care of the land, do this, that and
6 the another. I had an incident happen to me the
7 other day by a farmer and he sprayed his field and
8 the wind -- I also have bees on my property.
9 Everything that they pollinate, the spray hit and
10 killed every bit of it. The leaves fell off my
11 fruit trees, my tomato plants curled up and you
12 know what I got? Zero. They don't give two
13 shits, it's all about greed.

14 MR. AGRANOFF: Sir, please don't use
15 that type of language for the purposes of the
16 record. We appreciate it.

17 MR. WYATT: Well, greed, disrespect.
18 The respect in this country has went straight down
19 the toilet along with our politicians. They have
20 sat here and run us over the coals for many, many
21 years. My family lost their farm during the
22 depression. Do you think the government give two
23 craps about that? No. So to sit here and say,
24 well, we are going to benefit your family and we
25 are going to do this, that and the other, how

1 about lease your farm out to the future farmers,
2 the kids that want to try to farm? If you can't
3 make money on your own farm, sell out. You are
4 already ready to retire anyway. I don't get it.
5 What's these panels going to do to my bees? Does
6 anybody care? Pollution, another good example.
7 Fernald. I helped clean Fernald up. Anybody know
8 where Fernald is? It's a plant that made uranium.
9 It's still leaching. You talk to them farmers
10 about leaching problems. Most of the farms down
11 there are no longer in existence. People were
12 contaminated by it.

13 There's no proof that there's not
14 going to be any contamination from these panels.
15 All the scientific bull crap, just like global
16 warming, global warming has been happening for
17 millions of years and now all of a sudden we are
18 going to try to change it. You are not going to
19 change it. Things do change. I've seen change.
20 I've seen Hamilton -- Butler County used to be a
21 big farming ground. It's all concrete city from
22 clean down there to Dayton, Ohio. It's almost
23 connected. Once it starts, it's a snowball
24 effect. That's all I've got to say.

25 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Is there

1 anybody else that would wish to testify?

2 (Sidney Ashworth was sworn.)

3 MS. AUGOSTINI: Please state and
4 spell your name and give your address.

5 THE WITNESS: My name is Sidney
6 Ashworth and I live 2721 Camden Road in Gasper
7 Township. My husband and I have signed a contract
8 to put some of our land into the Alamo Solar panel
9 project and, therefore, we are in favor of this
10 project. We were one of the last ones to sign a
11 contract, so it was a decision that took us some
12 time to research and find out and get accurate
13 information.

14 Some of the reasons we are in favor
15 of it is that it is a clean, renewable energy.
16 It's good for the economy of Preble County. It
17 will be better for the environment than many other
18 alternatives. Nuclear plants and coal plants are
19 all being closed up and this is a clean, healthier
20 alternative. Solar panels are nonpolluting.
21 There are some that say that farmland should be
22 used for crops. We feel we can only increase your
23 income due to the excess bushels of grain on the
24 market today.

25 However, the footprint that is being

1 used or being suggested for these solar panels is
2 not big enough that it will have much impact on
3 the pricing. The same sunshine used to grow crops
4 will make energy for many. Removal at the end of
5 the project will allow this land to once again be
6 planted with crops.

7 There are other positives about solar
8 panels. But to end with, this is our future, our
9 retirement and, finally, it's our decision. This
10 will also assist our children, grandchildren and
11 great-grandchildren so they can enjoy renewable
12 energy and secure their financial future. Thank
13 you.

14 MS. AUGOSTINI: Thank you. Is there
15 anybody else that would wish to testify? Just one
16 final comment, if there's anybody from the media,
17 please contact Matt Butler in the back. And on
18 behalf of the Ohio Power Citing Board, we would
19 like to thank everyone for coming to the hearing.
20 This will conclude the public hearing which will
21 be submitted on the record for the board's
22 consideration of this case. Thank you and good
23 night.

24 (Thereupon, the hearing concluded at
25 8:14 p.m.)

1 STATE OF OHIO)
2 COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY) SS: CERTIFICATE

3 I, Lisa K. Keller, a Notary Public within
4 and for the State of Ohio, duly commissioned and
5 qualified,

6 DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the above-named
7 hearing was reduced to writing by me
8 stenographically in the presence of the parties
9 and thereafter reduced to typewriting.

10 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a
11 relative or Attorney of either party nor in any
12 manner interested in the event of this action.

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1 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
2 set my hand and seal of office at Dayton, Ohio, on
3 this 25th day of June, 2019.

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LISA K. KELLER
NOTARY PUBLIC, STATE OF OHIO
My commission expires 11-6-2023

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