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To: The Ohio Power Siting Board
180 E. Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

From: Jane Harf, Executive Director

Date: January 22, 2021

Re: 20-1288-EL-BGN

On behalf of Green Energy Ohio (GEO), I am writing to express the organization's support for the New Market Solar Farm in Highland County under development by Hecate Energy. The GEO Statement of Policy Positions endorses "the expansion of residential, community, and utility-scale solar projects supported by a robust supply chain and skilled workforce." The New Market project meets or exceeds all criteria that GEO takes into consideration.

As with other large-scale renewable energy projects, solar farms generate much needed revenue for local communities, including school districts. It is estimated that the combined New Market units will contribute close to \$1 million annually in taxes. This revenue is considerably higher than the tax income generated by the current land use, without adding measurably to the demand for municipal services. The economic wellbeing of a community is also impacted by employment and the corresponding support for local businesses. In addition to meeting the 80% Ohio labor statutory requirement, Hecate intends to utilize area companies for engineering, surveying, site preparation, construction, and ongoing operation and maintenance support.

The GEO Statement of Policy Positions also requires that projects demonstrate sensitivity to issues affecting wildlife, ecosystems, and the environment. Hecate's sustainability ethic ensures that their projects are integrated into the ecosystem around them, including the use of local plant species, drainage and stormwater management design, and avoidance of existing wildlife habitat wherever possible. Solar farms have been shown to provide agricultural benefits related to runoff, erosion, and crop pollination. To accomplish those objectives, the company has committed to including a vegetation maintenance plan in the project application.

Green Energy Ohio believes that the proliferation of utility-scale solar projects across the state is evidence of the demand for clean, affordable renewable energy. In addition to the benefits listed above, any serious attempt to reduce carbon must focus on the development and installation of clean energy technologies. We appreciate your consideration of our statement of support for the New Market Solar Farm.

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Summary: Public Comment Public Comment of Jane Harf, via website electronically filed by
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