

**From:** [Puco ContactOPSB](#)  
**To:** [Puco Docketing](#)  
**Subject:** public comment for 21-0041-EL-BGN  
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Hello OPSB members. My name is Kimberly Blevins and I'm a landowner in the Palomino Solar Energy Project, alongside my husband, Richard. I appreciate the use of this site to voice my comments, some very personal comments, but unfortunately are necessary as we have to fight for our rights. As landowner's, we never thought we would need someone else's approval to utilize our land as we choose. Richard and I have been married for almost 38 years and all of those years have involved him working on a sod farm. He originally worked on his father's sod farm and in 1994 he started his own business but rented ground from his father. In 2001 we bought 103 acres and moved the sod farm to its current location. It was due to a lot of hard labor and some misfortune that Richard and I were able to afford the acreage. Richard was injured during a chiropractic manipulation and at 36 years of age, became paralyzed in various areas, from his waist down to the soles of his feet. He had to learn to walk again...among many, many other health issues. It was a devastating time for our family as you can imagine. His injury resulted in a whopping 63% body impairment per the American Medical Association diagnosis. Richard went through a very serious depression at this time. He was a candidate for a social security disability pension but the thought of being disabled only worsened his depression. I was enrolled at Mount Carmel as a full-time student at this time and our children were still very dependent on us. It was a very difficult time as there was work to be done, grass to be mown, bills to pay, kids to feed, employees to pay and homework! Richard didn't know what a normal 9-5 job was like. He sometimes worked 3 or more weeks without a day off. Richard was always at work, making a living and he had to miss a lot of family time. During his recovery period from his injuries he was able to copulate a plan for our future and slowly began to initiate that plan.

Richards injuries warranted a small settlement and that along with years of hard physical labor allowed a down payment for our land. We pressed on, that's what we do. He never had a second thought as to what to do with the money. He bought land with intentions to hand it down, keep it in the family. Richard and I have two adult children and five grandchildren. Our daughter Kristy holds a master's degree in education and our son Jeff earned an associate degree and currently runs the sod farm. I have a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. We are educated, hard-working, law-abiding, tax-paying, responsible, moral, ethical, respectful, responsible citizens of Highland county. We have belonged to our home church for over 26 years. We are blessed at this time in our lives to be financially stable, resultant from many years of hard, physical labor from our family. This above mentioned situation along with our landowner rights is what drives our determination to press on! This is why we were so ambitious, to better ourselves and our family, because we thought we had rights to what belongs to us.

In 2018 Richard's father passed and he along with his 3 siblings inherited more than 320 acres of land. They formed an LLC and signed up land for the project. The solar project is an enormous opportunity for our family, our community and our environment. This project would assist our family with many opportunities as well as affordable education for years to come, perhaps a piece of the American dream! As a registered nurse with a background in mental health I am so enthralled that the local health department would be receiving \$27,860.00 annually for 30 years! Also our local Mental health district would receive \$27,930.00 annually, as well as our local fire/ambulance districts receiving \$168,630.00 annually for 30 years.! Our schools and community as a whole would be receiving over one million dollars a year. This money is a free gift for our community and would not be possible if landowners refused to sign up for the project. This enormous amount of money would benefit our community from the brink of financial instability to financial ABILITY! Although we have recently been accused of "worshipping the almighty dollar" it is God that we worship and we thank Him for this opportunity. I cannot be against something that's so beneficial for my family, community and environment. Although we have had trials in our life we can now reap some undeserving rewards. We continue to press on and are very excited for this solar project to begin.

Thank you

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Summary: Public Comment of Kimberly Blevins, via website, electronically filed by Docketing Staff on behalf of Docketing