

BEFORE THE OHIO SITING BOARD

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In the Matter of the Application:
of AEUG Union Solar, LLC for a :
Certificate of Environmental : Case No.
Compatibility and Public Need : 20-1405-EL-BGN
to Construct a Solar Electric :
Generation Facility in :
Union County, Ohio :

- - -

PROCEEDINGS

Before Greta See and Matthew Sandor,
Administrative Law Judges
Jennifer French, Chair of the Ohio Power Siting Board

- - -

Monday, August 16, 2021
6:00 p.m.
Bunsold Middle School
14198 State Route 4
Marysville, Ohio 43040

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MARILYN K. MARTIN, RPR

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL REPORTER

- - -

ANDERSON REPORTING SERVICES, INC.
3040 Riverside Drive, Suite 125
Columbus, Ohio 43221
(614) 326-0177

1 APPEARANCES:

2 MICHAEL J. SETTINERI, Attorney at Law
3 MARK A. HYLTON, Attorney at Law
4 Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, LLP
5 52 East Gay Street
6 Columbus, Ohio 43215
7 (614) 464-6400
8 mjsettineri@vorys.com
9 mahylton@vorys.com

10 On behalf of AEUG Union Solar, LLC.

11 THAYNE D. GRAY, Attorney at Law
12 Union County Prosecuting Attorney
13 249 West Fifth Street
14 Marysville, Ohio 43040
15 (937) 645-4190
16 tgray@unioncountyohio.gov

17 On behalf of York Township in Union
18 County and Union Soil and Water
19 Conservation District.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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ALJ SANDOR: The Ohio Power Siting Board has scheduled for public hearing at this time and place Case No. 20-1405-EL-BGN, which is captioned In the Matter of the Application of AEUG Union Solar, LLC, for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need.

My name is Matthew Sandor, and I am one the administrative law judges in the board's legal department assigned to hear this case. Presiding with me this evening is Greta See, another administrative law judge from the legal department, as well as the chair of the Ohio Power Siting Board, Ms. Jennifer French.

There are also staff members from the board assisting us with the hearing tonight as well as individuals from the public affairs department. You likely passed them on your way in this evening. But they are the individuals wearing PUCO/OSB badge or shirt. They are available if you have questions concerning the board's process, if you need assistance in accessing any of the documents submitted in this case or if you just have general

1 questions about the hearing tonight.

2 At this time, I would like to take the
3 appearances of counsel on behalf of the parties.
4 Counsel for AEUG Union Solar, LLC.

5 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you, Your Honors,
6 Chair. On behalf of AEUG Union Solar, LLC, Michael
7 Settineri, Mark Hylton, for the law firm of Vorys,
8 Sater, Seymour and Pease, 52 East Gay Street,
9 Columbus, Ohio, 43215.

10 ALJ SEE: Mr. Settineri, at this time, if
11 you have someone here that can answer questions about
12 the project, can you also introduce them, please.

13 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you for the
14 reminder, Your Honor. Also with us tonight is Brian
15 Dunneback in the orange shirt. If anyone has
16 questions after the hearing, please feel free to ask
17 him any questions. Thank you.

18 ALJ SEE: Thank you.

19 ALJ SANDOR: Counsel for any other parties
20 present this evening that would like to make an
21 appearance at this time?

22 MR. GRAY: Thayne Gray, Assistant
23 Prosecuting Attorney here on behalf of the townships
24 and Union Soil and Water Conservation District.

1 ALJ SANDOR: On behalf of York Township;
2 is that correct?

3 MR. GRAY: Yes.

4 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. Mr. Gray, could you
5 come down and sit in the front, please? Thank you.

6 The subject of today's hearing is an
7 application filed by AEUG Union Solar, LLC, for the
8 purpose of constructing a solar powered electric
9 generation facility of up to 325 megawatts in
10 Washington and York Townships in Union County.

11 The application was filed on December 23
12 and 24, 2020. I would also note that the board staff
13 filed a report of investigation on May 19, 2021.
14 This report is a recommendation of the board's staff
15 and does not necessarily reflect what the board's
16 final determination in this case will be.

17 The purpose of this evening's public
18 hearing is to receive additional testimony regarding
19 the application from persons in the local community
20 but who are not parties to the case. Tonight's
21 public hearing will not be treated as a
22 question-and-answer session, but rather, an
23 opportunity to let the board know what you think
24 about the proposed project.

1 Tonight's public hearing is only one
2 aspect of the process in this case. A public hearing
3 was previously held on June 3, 2021. If you offered
4 testimony at the last public hearing, we ask that you
5 not testify again. Your prior testimony is already
6 part of the record of this case, and we would like to
7 hear from other individuals who are waiting to offer
8 their views to the board tonight. You may supplement
9 your testimony by submitting written comments to the
10 board.

11 An evidentiary hearing will be scheduled
12 to occur at the board's offices in Columbus in the
13 near future. The purpose of the evidentiary hearing
14 is for the parties and the board staff to provide
15 testimony and other evidence regarding the project.

16 Tonight's hearing is being transcribed by
17 a court reporter. If you plan to testify, please
18 speak clearly so that the court reporter can
19 accurately reflect your comments on the record.
20 Also, if you have prepared a written statement, it
21 would be helpful if you provide a copy to the court
22 reporter for reference to ensure the transcript is
23 accurate.

24 After I finish with this introduction, we

1 will begin by inviting individuals on the sign-in
2 sheet to speak about the proposed project. Each
3 person who signed up to testify will be permitted to
4 speak once about the proposed project. Before you
5 present your testimony, we will ask you to take an
6 oath or affirmation that what you're about to say is
7 the truth.

8 We'll also ask you to state your name and
9 address for the record. You will then provide your
10 thoughts on the proposed project. The parties to the
11 case and Judge See and I will be permitted to ask you
12 questions about your statement. The testimony that
13 you provide tonight will be considered part of the
14 official record in this case, and it will be reviewed
15 by the board before a final decision is made on the
16 application.

17 A couple of other notes. If you decide
18 that you do not want to testify when we read your
19 name from the sign-in sheet, you can merely pass to
20 the next witness. If you decide that you'd prefer to
21 file written comments in the case docket, the board
22 staff can answer your questions about how to do that.
23 Also, once you finish testifying or if you're just
24 here to observe, you may leave the hearing at any

1 time you wish. We just ask that you do so quietly.

2 The board appreciates your participation
3 in tonight's hearing, and we want everyone who has
4 signed up to testify to have the opportunity to do
5 so. For that reason, please keep your statement to a
6 reasonable length of no more than five minutes. At
7 this time, we will begin with the testimony.

8 So the first registered witness we have is
9 Jeremy Hinkle. If you could please come up to the
10 beginning of this aisle right here and then face us.
11 And also, unfortunately, since we don't have any
12 mics, could you please project as much as possible.

13 And then I want everyone to know the next
14 witness is Jody King.

15 Okay. Please raise your right hand.

16 (Witness sworn.)

17 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
18 name for the record.

19 MR. HINKLE: Jeremy Hinkle, J-E-R-E-M-Y,
20 H-I-N-K-L-E.

21 ALJ SANDOR: Please provide your address
22 including the township.

23 MR. HINKLE: It is -- I'm not in the
24 township. But it's 1188 Dublin Road, Columbus, Ohio.

1 ALJ SANDOR: Do you reside or work within
2 the project area?

3 MR. HINKLE: No.

4 ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed with your
5 testimony.

6 MR. HINKLE: On behalf of the Operating
7 Engineers Local 18, I am here to support the approval
8 of the AEUG Union Solar, LLC, project. The operating
9 engineers are individuals who operate heavy equipment
10 such as bulldozers, excavators, backhoes, forklifts
11 and so on. The roads and bridges you drive on were
12 most likely built by members of the Local 18, along
13 with our fellow union tradesmen and women.

14 Although we do not have an agreement
15 signed with AEUG Union Solar to perform the work
16 associated with the project, we believe our local
17 signatory contractors will secure this work, thus
18 providing our membership with numerous employment
19 opportunities. In turn, high paying wages, health
20 care benefits, apprenticeship programs can continue
21 to grow because of the solar industry. If approved,
22 the AEUG Union Solar will not only create jobs, but
23 you can expect an economic impact, additional tax
24 money and clean energy for Ohio as a result of the

1 project. We encourage the Ohio Power Siting Board to
2 support the jobs of the men and women of Local 18 by
3 approving the AEUG Union Solar.

4 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you.

5 Any questions from counsel?

6 MR. SETTINERI: No.

7 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions from the bench?

8 (No response.)

9 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you, sir. You're
10 excused. And, yes, if you could provide the court
11 reporter with --

12 The next witness is Jody King, and then
13 following that, we have Patrick Hook.

14 Please raise your right hand.

15 (Witness sworn.)

16 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
17 name for the record.

18 MS. KING: Jody, J-O-D-Y, King, K-I-N-G.
19 My address is 20810 Davis Road, Raymond, Ohio, in
20 York Township.

21 ALJ SANDOR: And do you work or reside
22 within the project area?

23 MS. KING: I reside.

24 ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed with your

1 testimony.

2 MS. KING: We have already been to a -- or
3 I have already been to the meeting with the Cadence
4 Group and found out that the electric that's going to
5 be generated is going to be going to New York and New
6 Jersey. I have not got any responses back from the
7 Siting Board on my questions that I did submit when I
8 went to that meeting to verify for sure if that's
9 true or not. And I'd like to know if this
10 electricity is going to stay in Ohio, or is it going
11 to go somewhere else?

12 I'd like to know what your setbacks are
13 going to be. I'd like to know what it's going to do
14 to our property values. We've already had several
15 neighbors already put their houses up for sale, move
16 away due to the concerns of what's in the solar
17 panels, for their children and what affect it's going
18 to have on their children and their animals.

19 And I have been told my whole life that
20 the United States is the food capital of the world,
21 and we are feeding the world. But you all seem to be
22 taking all of our farmland. So I don't know how you
23 expect to feed everyone if you're using the good land
24 for solar panels. That's all I have to say.

1 ALJ SANDOR: One moment, Ms. King.

2 If -- It sounds like you have some questions. You're
3 welcome, if you have specific questions after the
4 hearing, to speak to the applicant's representative
5 or, anything with the board process, to ask some of
6 board staff in the back who are in the blue shirts.

7 MS. KING: So what is your time frame on
8 getting back, you know, emails and answering those?

9 ALJ SANDOR: That -- Again, the purpose of
10 right now is just to put on testimony that will be
11 transcribed on the record. After the ceremony,
12 please feel free to -- questions you asked, to ask
13 the OPSB staff and get your answer.

14 MS. KING: Just --

15 ALJ SANDOR: Just one moment.

16 MS. KING: Sure.

17 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions from counsel?

18 MR. SETTINERI: I would just comment that
19 after the meeting, Mr. Dunneback, we can try to
20 answer some of your questions.

21 MS. KING: Okay. Thank you.

22 ALJ SANDOR: And any questions from the
23 bench?

24 MS. FRENCH: No.

1 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. Thank you. You're
2 excused.

3 The next registered witness, Patrick Hook.
4 I will just mention, Mr. Hook, I believe you provided
5 testimony at the first hearing.

6 MR. HOOK: Yes.

7 ALJ SANDOR: We prefer that if you want to
8 supplement your testimony, you'd be able to do so
9 through comments with the board since your previous
10 testimony is already part of the record. Are you
11 amenable to that?

12 MR. HOOK: That would be fine.

13 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you, sir.

14 Our next witness is Donald Mathys, and the
15 witness following Mr. Mathys is Vickie Jerew.

16 Mr. Mathys, please raise your right hand.

17 (Witness sworn.)

18 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
19 name for the record.

20 MR. MATHYS: Donald Mathys, M-A-T-H-Y-S.
21 23000 State Route 47, West Mansfield, Ohio.

22 ALJ SANDOR: And can you include the
23 township.

24 MR. MATHYS: York.

1 ALJ SEE: Could you please speak up? I
2 don't think people towards the back of the auditorium
3 can hear you.

4 MR. MATHYS: I'm a poor speaker.

5 ALJ SANDOR: It's okay. As loud as you
6 can project. Just one more question. Do you work or
7 reside within the township?

8 MR. MATHYS: Reside.

9 ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed.

10 MR. MATHYS: The County, in my opinion,
11 does not need more money coming in from the solar
12 companies. They have income from Honda and related
13 business, so the County is not hurting for money.
14 The schools do not need more money. The schools, in
15 my opinion, are nearly a complete failure. That's
16 why we now have a socialist government. So more
17 money is not going to fix the schools.

18 I talked to several of our neighbors, and
19 they all told me the same thing, "I did not move out
20 here in the country to look at solar panels." So
21 home prices near the solar panels are going to drop
22 drastically in spite of what the company tells you
23 otherwise.

24 And, of course, the one thing I haven't

1 heard addressed is that the power has to go
2 somewhere, either overhead lines or it's going to go
3 underground. So that is going to affect people miles
4 from the solar panels. They're going to be possibly
5 across your property. I think that's -- people
6 haven't thought about that probably. And there's
7 many other problems, you know, such as the fact
8 they're not recyclable. I think they need further
9 development before they put thousands of them out
10 there.

11 Lights all night. You know, I don't live
12 in the country to see bright lights. If I wanted
13 bright lights, I would move to the city. So, you
14 know, they're going to keep the weeds down. Well,
15 they're not going to use sheep to keep the weeds
16 down. That's stupid. People don't raise sheep
17 hardly at all. It takes a special person to raise
18 sheep.

19 So they're going to be spraying them all
20 the time probably, and we don't need more chemicals
21 dumped on the ground. Of course, there's other
22 problems, tile. Every acre of Union County that's
23 farmed has tile in it. Tiles run for miles. Explain
24 to me. Am I supposed to crawl underneath a solar

1 panel with a little short shovel to try to dig up
2 three feet deep to fix my tile? That's not going to
3 work. I don't understand, that, sir.

4 So the solar companies have been throwing
5 money around trying to make themselves look good.
6 But using land that feeds people just so some big
7 foreign business can make more money is wrong.
8 Acciona, you're not wanted. You're not welcome.
9 Thank you.

10 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you. Any questions
11 from counsel?

12 (No response.)

13 ALJ SANDOR: From the bench?

14 (No response.)

15 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you, Mr. Mathys.

16 Vickie Jerew. And then I believe after
17 her, if I'm reading this correct, Betty Oats.

18 (Witness sworn.)

19 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
20 name for the record and please speak as loud as
21 possible.

22 MS. JEREW: Oh, boy. Vickie Jerew,
23 V-I-C-K-I-E, J-E-R-E-W.

24 ALJ SANDOR: Please provide your address

1 asking include the township.

2 MS. JEREW: 31101 State Route 31,
3 Richwood. I reside in Washington Township.

4 ALJ SANDOR: And do you work or reside
5 within the project area?

6 MS. JEREW: No. I just reside.

7 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. Please proceed with
8 your testimony.

9 MS. JEREW: First of all, I would like to
10 thank The Ohio Power Siting Board for having another
11 hearing for the Union Solar project in question, this
12 time, in person, so more people have a chance to
13 voice their opinion.

14 I for one am 100 percent against it. I'm
15 mostly speaking for my children and grandchildren as
16 I will probably not see the total impact of this
17 project. I appreciate the views of the rural
18 community, the waves of corn and beans in the summer
19 and the trees, along with nature. I view this and
20 other industrial projects an eyesore, the appearance
21 of which never change.

22 I also feel farmers are the backbone of
23 the country. They feed, fuel and clothe the world.
24 Taking ground away is essentially undermining that

1 foundation, also choking out the small family farms.
2 With the erratic weather around the country, for
3 example, the large hailstorm taking out a large field
4 of corn in Iowa of unknown acres, they need other
5 farmers help more than ever.

6 If projects such as this continue, we will
7 get to the point where we may be saying we didn't
8 know what we had until it was gone. If other
9 countries have control of our supply chain, we would
10 become an option, not a priority. I feel we could be
11 smarter with the energy we produce currently.

12 Now on to the problems I see if this
13 project goes through. Having seen videos of
14 operational sites, the transformers they are hooked
15 to make a constant and annoying whine, almost like a
16 cicada that will never stop. Also chemical runoff
17 such as PFAs, or polyfluoroalkyl, substances cited
18 from an article from the Observer August 7, 2021.

19 We all have well water. What if that
20 contaminates our drinking water supply? Also,
21 erosion, if nothing is planted there and trees are
22 removed, that of which seems wasteful and damaging to
23 the current ecosystem. Furthermore, there are other
24 placement opportunities that should be explored

1 before land grabbing such as the centers of divided
2 highways, an example vertical wind generators and/or
3 solar panels.

4 In closing, we don't directly benefit from
5 the power its said to produce. The downsides of this
6 project, to me, outweigh the potential benefits.

7 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you. Questions from
8 counsel?

9 MR. SETTINERI: No, thank you.

10 ALJ SANDOR: Question from the bench?

11 (No response.)

12 ALJ SANDOR: Would you mind providing a
13 copy of your statement to the court reporter, please?
14 You're excused. Thank you for coming out this
15 evening.

16 I apologize if I'm mispronouncing. Betty
17 G. Oats; is that correct? And then the next witness
18 is Jovonny Smith.

19 (Witness sworn.)

20 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
21 name for the record.

22 MS. OATS: Betty Oats, B-E-T-T-Y, O-A-T-S.

23 ALJ SANDOR: And pronounce as loud as you
24 can if you're able to. Please provide your address

1 including the township.

2 MS. OATS: 30651 Hoover-Moffitt Road, West
3 Mansfield, Ohio, 43358. And I live in York Township.

4 ALJ SANDOR: And do you work or reside
5 within the project area?

6 MS. OATS: We reside.

7 ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed with your
8 testimony.

9 MS. OATS: I think the solar panels should
10 come in. We have invested a lot of money in our
11 farm. We got 500 and some acres invested in the
12 solar panels. We have -- My husband has done nothing
13 but farm all his life. Now he's not able to farm
14 anymore. So when they offered us the solar panels,
15 we thought it was a good opportunity for us to keep
16 the farm and have income from it.

17 We're both 81 years old. We cannot afford
18 to pass this opportunity up. And they're going to
19 take good care of our ground. They're going to fix
20 the tile when they break it, and they're not going to
21 put cement down in the ground. They're going to just
22 put the little -- the whole solar panels. They're
23 not going to put cement down in the ground, so when
24 it's done it can be converted back to farm ground

1 when they get done.

2 But when they put out a chicken farm, they
3 can't really revert back to the farm ground. All
4 these houses going up around Marysville, can they go
5 back to farm ground? Look how much that's taken out
6 of there. They can't put back to farm ground. Ours
7 can be put back to farm ground someday. Thank you.

8 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you for your testimony.
9 Any questions from counsel?

10 MR. SETTINERI: No, sir.

11 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions from the bench?

12 (No response.)

13 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you very much.

14 And then our last witness registered for
15 tonight is Jovonny Smith.

16 (Witness sworn.)

17 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
18 name for the record.

19 MR. SMITH: Jovonny Smith, spelled,
20 J-O-V-O-N-N-Y. Last name is Smith, S-M-I-T-H.

21 ALJ SANDOR: Please provide your address
22 including the township.

23 MR. SMITH: 20005 Miller Road, Richwood,
24 Ohio, 43344, and it's York Township.

1 ALJ SANDOR: And do you work or reside
2 within the project area?

3 MR. SMITH: I reside.

4 ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed.

5 MR. SMITH: I'm giving testimony against
6 the approval of this project. My name is Jovonny
7 Smith. My wife and I raised two children and
8 currently live on Miller Road in York Township very
9 near both Union Solar and the Cadence Solar projects.

10 I grew up in York Township and watched my
11 father, as a York Township trustee, advocate for
12 zoning regulations. While some see zoning
13 regulations as a thorn in their side, I see them as a
14 mechanism to ensure township residents know what will
15 happen in their community.

16 When we wanted to build our home 25 years
17 ago, we had to get a zoning permit. When someone
18 wants to start a business, in a residential property,
19 they have to get a zoning permit. It disturbs me
20 greatly when a huge industrial solar company can be
21 built in our community with no regard for the
22 township's regulations.

23 There has been some recent Ohio
24 legislation that may help with that, but the

1 legislation does not apply to these two projects that
2 are already underway or in progress. In this case,
3 the Ohio Power Siting Board has the authority to
4 decide if an industrial solar complex can be built.

5 The OPSB website has the following
6 statement: Before construction can begin on a major
7 utility facility or economically significant wind
8 farm within the state of Ohio, a certificate of
9 environmental compatibility and public need must be
10 obtained from the OPSB. But that -- but that seems
11 to have been waived for Acciona's Union Solar project
12 as documented in OPSB staff report of investigation,
13 dated May 19, 2021.

14 There was a recommended finding in there
15 that said: The staff recommends that the board find
16 that the basis of need as specified under the R.C.
17 4906.10(A)(1) is not applicable to this facility as
18 the facility is neither an electric transmission line
19 nor a gas pipeline.

20 It seems the only need for this project is
21 for a huge international corporation to make a lot of
22 money. Also, a few landowners will make some money
23 since they are leasing property that is supposed to
24 be used for agriculture to this huge corporation for

1 at least 30 years. I have nothing against the
2 landowners doing what they want with their land if it
3 is within the current zoning regulations. But in my
4 opinion, a huge industrial solar complex is not
5 agriculture.

6 If York Township, or for that matter Union
7 County, has no jurisdiction over the industrial
8 complexes, what organization will ensure all of the
9 promises made in their application to OPSB to not
10 disturb neighbors, not disrupt water drainage, not to
11 cause pollution, not to adversely impact wildlife, et
12 cetera, are kept? If neighbors to this industrial
13 complex have complaints, I understand Acciona will
14 provide a phone number to call to make a report.
15 What if Acciona does not address the complaint? Who
16 will advocate for the neighbors? Is the only
17 resource a lawsuit against a huge corporation that
18 none of the neighbors, township or county can afford?

19 There are a lot of "we anticipate" and "we
20 don't expect" type of statements in Acciona's
21 application to the OPSB for the Union Solar project.
22 That should not be acceptable. Over the past several
23 months, I have witnessed how Acciona operates. The
24 whole process has been very secretive until they

1 have -- until they absolutely had to go public.

2 Initially Acciona seemed to want to get along with
3 the residents being impacted by the huge industrial
4 complex by asking how they could help the residents
5 be happy neighbors. All Acciona did with our input
6 was to explain it away, that they didn't have to do
7 it.

8 Simple things like Acciona planting
9 appropriate trees, bushes, shrubs as screening or
10 using black fencing were no longer up for discussion.
11 In fact, Acciona stopped meeting with the neighbors
12 totally. This behavior concerns me, that Acciona
13 will not be a nice neighbor as the construction
14 starts and operation begins. Acciona already
15 indicated they will sell the project after it is
16 operational, and who knows how nice that huge
17 corporation will be.

18 There are other reasons that some might
19 call subjective as to why I do not like having an
20 industrial complex next to my residence. The
21 unsightly view of row after row of solar panels out
22 my front window and reduced property values are a
23 couple. However, the biggest fear that I have is
24 that they will not be a nice neighbor and fulfill

1 their promises in their application.

2 They say when the contract is up in 30
3 plus years, Acciona will return the land to the same
4 state it is now. I most likely will not be here at
5 that time, and most of the landowners leasing their
6 property will be gone also. So the unfulfilled
7 promise will be left to our children and
8 grandchildren to deal with. Thank you.

9 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions from counsel?

10 MR. SETTINERI: No.

11 ALJ SANDOR: The bench?

12 (No response.)

13 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you for providing that.
14 You're excused. Thank you for your testimony today.

15 And is there -- Are there any more
16 witnesses? That actually concludes the witnesses
17 that signed up on the sheet we have. Is there anyone
18 else who would like to testify this evening?

19 MR. WELCH: I'd like to.

20 ALJ SANDOR: Sure.

21 (Witness sworn.)

22 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
23 name for the record.

24 MR. WELCH: Jeremy Welch, J-E-R-E-M-Y,

1 W-E-L-C-H.

2 ALJ SANDOR: Please provide your address
3 including the township.

4 MR. WELCH: Sure. 3331 East Augusta Drive
5 Northwest, McConnelssville, Ohio. And I don't live in
6 the any of the townships here.

7 ALJ SANDOR: So you do not reside in the
8 project area?

9 MR. WELCH: Correct.

10 ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed with your
11 testimony.

12 MR. WELCH: So I'm here on behalf of the
13 carpenters union. I just wanted to -- I did a little
14 research before I came. We currently have over 150
15 members who live in Union and surrounding counties,
16 member of the carpenters union, most of which are
17 working outside of these counties. A lot of them
18 work in Columbus. This is a great opportunity to
19 bring some of those guys home so they can work close
20 to the house. They don't have to get up early and
21 fight that traffic.

22 I researched that the average income in
23 Union County for a resident is about \$28,000 a year.
24 Our first year apprentices start out at \$18 an hour,

1 so an annual income of \$36,000, which is going to
2 help out the counties with tax revenue. This project
3 should take somewhere between 180 and 120 first year
4 apprentices.

5 This would be a great opportunity for
6 people in this area to get their kids, their
7 grandkids a really good career with the carpenters
8 union. Once they become a member of the carpenters
9 union, we put them to work anywhere. And especially
10 if they're working for Acciona, they have a lot of
11 solar projects proposed around the regional council
12 that keep them guys working.

13 In a nutshell, this is a good project for
14 construction in general. The carpenter union
15 supports this. And we hope that the Siting Board
16 does also.

17 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions from counsel?

18 MR. SETTINERI: No, sir.

19 ALJ SANDOR: From the bench?

20 (No response.)

21 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you. You're excused.

22 And then actually, Mr. Hook, if you would
23 like to -- if you're still here and would like to
24 provide testimony, please feel free since we reached

1 kind of the end of our list pretty quickly.

2 MR. HOOK: Sure.

3 (Witness sworn.)

4 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
5 name for the record.

6 MR. HOOK: Patrick Hook. P-A-T-R-I-C-K,
7 H-O-O-K.

8 ALJ SANDOR: Please provide your address
9 including the township.

10 MR. HOOK: 1502 Glenn Avenue, Columbus,
11 Ohio, Franklin County.

12 ALJ SANDOR: And do you work or reside
13 within the project area?

14 MR. HOOK: I do not live, but I represent
15 workers in this area.

16 ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed.

17 MR. HOOK: Good evening. My name is
18 Patrick Hook. I'm the business manager and a
19 longtime member of the International Brotherhood of
20 Electrical Workers Local 683.

21 Local 683 represents over 2,000 highly
22 skilled electrical workers in the central Ohio area.
23 Local 683 members have and continue to work in many
24 industries in and around central Ohio and Union

1 County, from large projects like the Honda plant and
2 the businesses that support it, to the new Crew
3 stadium, large data centers, hospitals, many OSU
4 projects, to small residential service calls.

5 We're now excited to be part of the solar
6 development in this area. IBEW 683 is eager to see
7 the transition from coal generation to generation
8 with lower or no carbon emissions such as solar.
9 Rural areas with vast farmland are particularly
10 suited to be a great area for this project.

11 I speak in complete support for jobs the
12 Union Solar project will provide. The hundreds of
13 direct jobs will have a lasting impact on our area.
14 I note the IBEW stands ready to provide the necessary
15 workers to complete this project in a safe, timely
16 manner.

17 It is also our intention that if given the
18 opportunity, these jobs will become lifelong careers
19 in the electrical industry, good paying, steady jobs
20 with benefits, jobs that this entire area is in need
21 of.

22 Thank you for your time this evening. I
23 look forward to working with the Union Solar project
24 team and the Ohio Power Siting Board, providing any

1 information I can to ensure this project moves
2 forward.

3 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions from counsel?

4 MR. SETTINERI: No, sir.

5 ALJ SANDOR: From the bench?

6 (No response.)

7 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you for your testimony.
8 And could you please provide a copy to the court
9 reporter.

10 Now, is there anyone else that would like
11 to testify before we close out the hearing? All
12 right, sir. Please come up.

13 (Witness sworn.)

14 ALJ SANDOR: Please state and spell your
15 name for the record.

16 MR. WEINBRECHT: My name is Todd, T-O-D-D,
17 Weinbrecht, W-E-I-N-B-R-E-C-H-T. I live at 1866
18 Chiprock Drive, Marysville, Ohio, which is Paris
19 Township.

20 ALJ SANDOR: Do you work or reside within
21 the project area?

22 MR. WEINBRECHT: No.

23 ALJ SANDOR: Please proceed with your
24 testimony.

1 MR. WEINBRECHT: Being a 20-year resident
2 of Union County and knowing what I know of the solar
3 projects, this is a great opportunity for this area.
4 My employer is the Ohio Carpenters, and that
5 employment involves me being the training coordinator
6 for the apprenticeship. Knowing how many apprentices
7 we have out of Union County that come down to our
8 training center that even realize the opportunity is
9 there for them is pretty much ridiculous.

10 I've done everything that I can do. Still
11 working pretty hard in trying to get more Union
12 County graduates, young gentlemen and women to come
13 down to our training center for an opportunity of a
14 lifetime. For this solar panel project and the
15 number of employees that it will employ, it is the
16 perfect opportunity for a Union County resident to
17 come into the carpenters union and make a fair and
18 decent wage to provide for the area and the
19 community, not only the revenue that's going to be
20 brought in from this particular project, but -- you
21 know, and the people -- this project is a year, two
22 years long. But as a union carpenter and
23 understanding the -- understanding the workforce
24 that's available to them for a future even after the

1 project is done.

2 We need people. We need people from Union
3 County to come in here. I'm training the people. I
4 know the particulars of the projects; and I know that
5 this, again, is a perfect opportunity to get people
6 employed and get that mean average of wages up higher
7 than the \$28,000. That will be all.

8 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you. Any questions
9 from counsel?

10 MR. SETTINERI: No.

11 ALJ SANDOR: Any questions from the bench?

12 (No response.)

13 ALJ SANDOR: Thank you, sir, for your
14 testimony.

15 Before we close out the evening, anyone
16 else that would like to testify this evening?

17 (No response.)

18 ALJ SANDOR: Okay. Hearing none, thank
19 you to everyone for their participation this evening.
20 We would also like to thank Bunsold Middle School for
21 allowing us to use their facilities in order to
22 conduct this public hearing in person with you this
23 evening.

24 The hearing is now concluded, and the

1 hearing transcript will be submitted on the record
2 for the board's consideration in this case. Thank
3 you all again, and have a nice evening.

4 - - -

5 And, thereupon, the hearing was adjourned
6 at 6:39 p.m.

7 - - -

C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-E

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is
a true, correct and complete written transcript of
the proceedings in this matter, taken by me on the
16th day of August, 2021, and transcribed from my
stenographic notes.



MARILYN K. MARTIN
Notary Public in and for the State of Ohio
and Registered Professional Reporter.

My Commission Expires October 15, 2021.

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