

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SCIOTO FARMS SOLAR
PROJECT, LLC, FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED

Case No.: 21-868-EL-BGN

PUBLIC HEARING

DATE: Friday, May 25, 2022

TIME: 6:08 p.m.

BEFORE: Honorable Megan Janelle Addison

LOCATION: Circleville High School

380 Clark Drive

Circleville, OH 43113

REPORTED BY: Nic Joseph, Notary Public

JOB NO.: 5178090

A P P E A R A N C E S

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A P P E A R A N C E S (Cont'd.)

ALSO PRESENT:

Jenifer French, Chair of the Ohio Power Siting
Board

Jay Wippel, Ad Hoc Voting Member, Ohio Power
Siting Board

Chris Mullins, Ad Hoc Voting Member, Ohio Power
Siting Board

Kimberly Schreckengost, Scioto Farms Solar
Project

Rachel Crary, Scioto Farms Solar Project

Mark Carney, Scioto Farms Solar Project

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P R O C E E D I N G S

THE REPORTER: Good evening. My name is Nic Joseph; I'm the reporter assigned by Veritext to take the record of this proceeding. We are now on the record at 6:08 p.m. on May 25 [sic], 2022, at 380 Clark Drive, Circleville, Ohio 43113.

THE COURT: Thank you, everyone. I believe we are ready to proceed with this evening's hearing.

The Ohio Power Siting Board has scheduled for public hearing at this time and place Case No. 21-868-EL-BGN, which is captioned In the Matter of the Application of Scioto Farms Solar Project, LLC, for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need.

My name is Megan Addison, and I am the Administrative Law Judge in the Board's legal department assigned to hear this case. Presiding with me this evening is the Chair of the Ohio Power Siting Board, Ms. Jenifer French.

The passage of Senate Bill 52 provides new opportunities for county commissioners and township trustees to participate in the siting of solar projects in their community. County commissioners may choose one commissioner or a

1 designee to serve as an ad hoc board member. In
2 addition, township trustees may choose one trustee or
3 a designee to serve as their ad hoc board member
4 representative.

5 The Board of Pickaway County
6 Commissioners appointed Commissioner Jay Wippel, and
7 the Board of Trustees of Wayne Township appointed Mr.
8 Chris Mullins as the ad hoc board members for this
9 projects. Both are joining us this evening, and I
10 believe Mr. Mullins would like to say a few words.

11 MR. MULLINS: Thank you.

12 My name is Chris Mullins, and I am here
13 to represent the township trustees, as their ad hoc
14 representative. Just wanted to thank everybody for
15 coming tonight. I think it's a very important part of
16 the process to see community involvement.

17 And I look forward to hearing your
18 comments and -- and all your input. So again, thank
19 you for this...

20 THE COURT: Thank you very much, Mr.
21 Mullins.

22 There are also staff members from the
23 Board assisting with us -- assisting us with the
24 hearing tonight as well as individuals from the Public
25 Affairs Department. You likely passed them on your

1 way in this evening, but they are the individuals
2 wearing a PUCO or OPSB badge or shirt. They are
3 available if you have questions concerning the Board's
4 process, if you need assistance accessing any of the
5 documents submitted in this case, or if you just have
6 general questions about the hearing tonight.

7 At this time, I would like to take
8 appearances on behalf of the parties.

9 Scioto Farms Solar Project?

10 MS. SHEELY: Yes. Good evening. I'm
11 Sommer Sheely with the law firm of Bricker & Eckler,
12 100 South Third Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. Also
13 here from Bricker & Eckler, my colleagues, Dylan
14 Borchers, and our fellow, Paige Trent, and also here
15 on behalf of the project are Kimberly Schreckengost,
16 Rachel Crary, and Mark Carney.

17 THE COURT: Thank you.

18 I believe there is also a
19 representative from the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
20 present this evening.

21 MR. ARNOLD: Thank you, Your Honor.

22 Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 My name is Dale, D-A-L-E, Arnold.
24 Director of Energy facility. I am not an attorney and
25 legal counsel. However, I've been assigned to

1 basically -- to observe and take notes. We appreciate
2 your acceptance of our motion to intervene as the
3 party of record in the states and working on this
4 process further. Thank you.

5 THE COURT: Thank you.

6 Are there any other parties present
7 this evening that would like to make an appearance at
8 this time?

9 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Is it okay to speak
10 from here?

11 THE COURT: Certainly.

12 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: All right. Robert
13 Chamberlain. I'm an assistant county prosecutor. I'm
14 here as a representation for Wayne Township.

15 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Chamberlain.
16 Any others?

17 The subject of today's hearing is an
18 application filed by Scioto Farms Solar Project, LLC,
19 for the purpose of constructing a solar-powered
20 electric generation facility of up to 110 megawatts in
21 Pickaway County. The application was filed on
22 December 13, 2021.

23 The Board staff filed a report of
24 investigation on May 10, 2022. This report is a
25 recommendation of the Board staff and does not

1 necessarily reflect what the Board's final
2 determination in this case will be.

3 The purpose of this evening's public
4 hearing is to receive testimony regarding the
5 application from persons in the local community who
6 are affected by the proposed project.

7 Tonight's public hearing will not be a
8 question-and-answer session but, rather, an
9 opportunity for you to let the Board know what you
10 think about the proposed project.

11 Tonight's public hearing is only one
12 aspect of the process in this case. And evidentiary
13 hearing is currently scheduled to commence on July 11,
14 2022, at the Board's offices in Columbus.

15 The purpose of the evidentiary hearing
16 is for the parties and the Board staff to provide
17 testimony and other evidence regarding the project.

18 Tonight's hearing is being transcribed
19 by a court reporter. If you plan to testify, please
20 speak clearly so that the court reporter can
21 accurately reflect your comments on the record, and we
22 do have a microphone set up here at the front of the
23 room that will assist us in transcribing this
24 evening's hearing the most accurate way we can.

25 Also, if you have prepared a written

1 statement, it would be helpful if you provide a copy
2 to the court reporter for reference to ensure the
3 transcript is accurate.

4 After I finish with the introduction,
5 we will begin by inviting individuals on the sign-in
6 sheet to speak about the proposed project. Each
7 person who signed up to testify will be permitted to
8 speak once about the proposed project. Before you
9 present your testimony, we will ask you to take an
10 oath or affirmation that what you are about to say is
11 the truth. We will also ask you to state your name
12 and address for the record. You will then provide
13 your thoughts on the proposed projects. The parties
14 to the case and I will be permitted to ask you
15 questions about your statement. The testimony that
16 you provide tonight will be considered part of the
17 official record in this case, and it will be reviewed
18 by the Board before a final decision is made on the
19 application.

20 A couple of other notes before we
21 begin. If you decide that you do not want to testify
22 when we read your name from the sign-in sheet, you can
23 pass to the next witness. If you decide that you
24 prefer to file written comments in the case docket,
25 the Board staff can answer your questions about how to

1 do that. Also, once you finish testifying or if
2 you're just here to observe, you may leave the hearing
3 at any time you wish.

4 The Board appreciates your
5 participation in tonight's hearing, and we want
6 everyone who has signed up to testify to have the
7 opportunity to do so. For that reason, please keep
8 your statement to a reasonable length of no more than
9 five minutes. I will be holding up a sign when you
10 have 30 seconds left to provide comments, and I will
11 also let you know when your five minutes are up.
12 Again, we set these time limits so that everyone who
13 would like to testify here this evening has time to
14 speak. If you have additional comments that you would
15 like to make but run out of time, you may file written
16 comments in this case.

17 At this time, we will go ahead and
18 begin with our testimony. The first person I have is
19 Shaun Watson.

20 Mr. Watson, if you could raise your
21 right hand.

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1 WHEREUPON,

2 SHAUN WATSON

3 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

6 EXAMINATION

7 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

8 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
9 for the record.

10 A It's Shaun Watson, S-H-A-U-N W-A-T-S-O-N.

11 Q Please provide your address, including the
12 township.

13 A 27508 State Route 104.

14 Q And do you reside or work within the project
15 area?

16 A I reside.

17 Q Thank you. You may proceed.

18 A My name is Shaun. I'm a neighbor of the
19 project. Some of the neighbors are concerned with
20 speaking publicly in support of the project.

21 When I first heard of the project, like many
22 of you, I was completely against it. In a perfect
23 world, the land would stay as-is.

24 But after hearing from the current
25 landowners, I realized this is unrealistic. If the

1 project gets cancelled, they will just end up selling
2 to the next bidder, which will likely be a warehouse,
3 a data center, housing development, apartments, et
4 cetera. So -- has done a good job of easing the
5 burden for us as landowners in our community with the
6 money that will go each year to Circleville schools.

7 These are some of the reasons I support the
8 project. Thank you.

9 Q Thank you very much.

10 THE COURT: Any questions?

11 MS. SHEELY: No. Thank you.

12 THE COURT: Next, I have Lucinda
13 Hartsock.

14 And just because it's a larger room,
15 Garrett Wells, I have you next.

16 Good evening, Ms. Hartsock.

17 MS. HARTSOCK: Good evening.

18 THE COURT: Please raise your right
19 hand.

20 WHEREUPON,

21 LUCINDA HARTSOCK

22 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
23 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
24 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

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EXAMINATION

BY JUDGE ADDISON:

Q Thank you. Please state your name and spell it for the record.

A Lucinda Hartsock, L-U-C-I-N-D-A. Hartsock is H-A-R-T-S-O-C-K.

Q Thank you. And please provide your address, including the township.

A 24666 State Route 104, Circleville and Wayne Township.

Q And do you reside or work within the project area?

A Reside.

Q Thank you. You may proceed.

A I wanted to address the issue of property values. My daughter and her family have recently purchased their current home in 2019 and poured their savings into fixing up the place, so it can be their forever home. They did this, unknowing that, soon, there could be a solar spread out through Pickaway County. The current case we are discussing tonight, if approved, will literally be seen from their yard.

We have spoken to some realtors in other counties that have experience with selling properties, and they have shared their concerns that it does

1 affect selling properties and can even affect homes
2 that are not directly in view of the solar plants.

3 We also have had a couple friends show
4 interest in some homes that were for sale in the
5 surrounding areas, and when they heard of all the
6 proposed solar projects, they decided to stay in --
7 community where they were -- where there were no
8 projects in place.

9 We have expressed these concerns at meetings
10 with the solar companies, and none of their employees
11 had an answer, their only response being, "Sorry."
12 Well, we are sorry, too, sorry that this invasion is
13 not only a complete eyesore to our beautiful community
14 and homes but sorry that property rights are not being
15 respected. We have strict zoning laws in our township
16 and for good reason, to maintain and protect the
17 integrity.

18 I'm not sure anyone could have predicted
19 that industrialized solar electric plants would
20 quickly take over. It is an excessive amount of land
21 being taken and is heartbreaking and scary.

22 I am also concerned about water. Everyone
23 up and down Westfall Road only has access to well
24 water. This is also concerning me for my family. I
25 do not like hearing of the harmful chemicals found

1 that make up these panels.

2 Also, we have drainage concerns. These
3 fields have many tiling and draining systems in place,
4 and what disruptions will these large panels across
5 acres of land do to not only our drinking water but
6 also runoff issues across roads and our ecosystems?

7 In all, I feel that, even though the
8 companies will tell you different, the citizens in
9 Pickaway County have been taken advantage of for
10 money, and if approved, we will be stuck dealing with
11 the rising issues, some which we may not know of yet,
12 that come from these projects. It scares me for my
13 generation, for the next, and for those who follow.

14 I ask that you'll deny this project. Thank
15 you.

16 Q Thank you very much.

17 THE COURT: Any questions?

18 Garrett Wells?

19 And then, next on my list, I have
20 Mallorey Bethel.

21 Mr. Wells, good to see you this
22 evening. Can you raise your right hand?

23 //

24 //

25 //

1 WHEREUPON,

2 GARRETT WELLS

3 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

6 THE COURT: Thank you.

7 THE REPORTER: I can't hear you. Can
8 you speak up a little bit, please? Thanks.

9 EXAMINATION

10 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

11 Q Can you state and spell your names?

12 A Garrett Wells, G-A-R-R-E-T-T W-E-L-L-S.

13 Q Thank you. And can you provide your
14 address?

15 A 26422 Westfall Road, Circleville.

16 Q Thank you. You can proceed with your
17 testimony.

18 A Hi. My name is Garrett Wells. I want to
19 ask you that you deny the -- solar farms project. We
20 love where we live. My family has always farmed, and
21 I hope to one day grow up and farm for... I may work
22 at a large farm or become an auctioneer, and if I
23 don't do any of these things, I really just want to do
24 something outdoors.

25 My reaction to learning about the solar

1 project has been hard. It's really hard to watch
2 the rich soil being dug up and rows of metal put into
3 fields that have been farmed for hundreds of years.

4 I worry that, someday, I will get the --
5 farmer, that there will not be land left to farm, most
6 land -- some land, but most won't have enough land of
7 their own. You'd have to go and rent acres.

8 I am -- I am also worried for all the
9 wildlife in the area. We have lots of deer. We have
10 turkeys, and we have lots of birds. We even have a
11 migratory bird that we saw in our -- and the
12 Circleville Herald that is endangered, and it passes
13 through. My mom got even a picture of three of them
14 that landed in our neighbor's backyard, not to mention
15 we have been seeing more eagles in the area with so
16 much of the area already down the -- the road a couple
17 miles covered with panels. And the studies we have
18 read about say that the panels can create a lake
19 effect. I worry for the birds that live in here --
20 live here or migrate here that will fly into the
21 panels and die.

22 I will be 62 when the lease is up if these
23 leases are approved. Please deny this project for my
24 family and my community. We don't want them. I don't
25 want to have the consequences of these panels for the

1 next years of my life. Thank you.

2 Q Thank you, Mr. Wells.

3 THE COURT: Any questions?

4 I'm so sorry, Mr. Wells. If you
5 wouldn't mind leaving a copy of your written
6 statement --

7 And that goes for anyone with a written
8 statement. That would be extremely helpful for the
9 court reporter this evening.

10 Thank you so much. Thank you.

11 THE REPORTER: Thank you. And would it
12 be possible to turn these up, the microphones, the
13 speakers?

14 THE COURT: I'm not sure how to do
15 that. I'll try. We'll get someone on it.

16 And additional speakers, you can just
17 leave. You don't have to come up on the stage. You
18 could just leave it right there on the edge of the
19 stage. That's fine.

20 Ms. Bethel?

21 MS. BETHEL: Yes.

22 THE COURT: All right. Please raise
23 your right hand.

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1 WHEREUPON,

2 MALLOREY BETHEL

3 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

6 EXAMINATION

7 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

8 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
9 for the record.

10 A It is M-A-L-L-O-R-E-Y B-E-T-H-E-L, Mallore
11 Bethel.

12 Q Thank you. And can you provide your address
13 with the township?

14 A 26422 Westfall Road, Circleville, Ohio
15 43113, Wayne Township.

16 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
17 the project area?

18 A Reside.

19 Q Thank you. You may proceed.

20 A Okay. Thank you. I was raised in Wayne
21 County. I have witnessed the intrusion of solar
22 facilities in the rural communities of Ross, Pickaway,
23 and Highland County, where I work. I had a front-row
24 view of the construction of the Yellow Bud Project,
25 which is just a few miles down from my property, and

1 now, here we stand, fighting yet another project that
2 we'll be seeing from my family's property.

3 I feel it's important to educate ourselves.
4 Like I said, I'm a teacher. We can't always just take
5 it straight from the source, so that's what I -- what
6 I have done to the best of my ability.

7 And the best way I can describe it is that
8 it's like is that it's like those medication
9 commercials that we see on TV. We've got a possible
10 solution for something, and, like, the commercials are
11 going to list the side effects. However, working with
12 these solar companies, I feel like they circle around
13 the side effects or just blatantly ignore them.

14 So today, I'm going to focus on agriculture
15 because I feel like it's going to have the biggest
16 impact on my community. I think it's important that
17 we kind of review some stats about agriculture, so we
18 can understand how important it is for the state of
19 Ohio and for Pickaway County.

20 The Buckeye State has remained one of the
21 nation's leaders in agriculture. It plays a very
22 important part of Ohio's economy. There's
23 approximately 75,000 farms, 200 different kinds of
24 crops, 400 different types of soil, and Ohio is only
25 one in four states in the U.S. considered to have 50

1 percent of its land classified as prime farmland.

2 We don't want to forget the livestock. They
3 need to eat, so we can eat. There are 1.25 billion
4 head of cattle and 10,000 active dairy farms, which --
5 we have one located there on 104. And this is
6 straight for Pickaway County. This is from the United
7 States Department of Agriculture. It's a stat from
8 2018.

9 Agriculture remains an important component
10 of the -- of Pickaway County's economy, as more than
11 90 percent of the land is in farms. Pickaway County
12 ranks fifth in Ohio in the production of corn and
13 seventh -- seventh in the production of soybeans in
14 the state.

15 So I just wanted to share that because I
16 feel like that's really important in justifying how
17 important agriculture is to us. I think that gives us
18 a quick overview that it's important, and I will say
19 that the vast majority of people that I know work in
20 agricultural industry as well as my own family.

21 So I think we must ask ourselves when
22 farmland is clearly important, especially today with
23 what is going on in our world and food shortages,
24 instabilities in imports and exports, and I think the
25 answer is really simple. These corporate companies

1 want to maximize their profits. They want lots of
2 acreage. They want to build with less output costs
3 and build as fast as they can. They want lots of
4 acres, and they want to build, like I said, very
5 quickly. I would think, if the crisis for renewable
6 energy was true with what we needed and it was not
7 about money, then we would find other viable sources.
8 I know for a fact that American Electric Power, for
9 example, owns 58,000 acres of strip mine land in
10 southeastern Ohio, but again, we're not -- they're not
11 pursuing that because they want to maximize their own
12 profits and work on those energy credits.

13 So I -- as I was asking myself this, and I
14 ask, you know, remind my son. Would you put your
15 stamp on this? Is this an idea of something you would
16 be proud of, confident in approving?

17 And I ask that you guys do the same and --
18 and hear the citizens, and I feel like people deserve
19 better. So thank you for your time.

20 Q Thank you.

21 THE COURT: Any questions?

22 MS. SHEELY: No. Thank you.

23 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Nothing.

24 THE COURT: Next, I have Anthony Shirk.
25 Then, after Mr. Shirk, I have Dan Sime.

1 Welcome, Mr. Shirk. Can you please
2 raise your right hand?

3 WHEREUPON,

4 ANTHONY SHIRK

5 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
6 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
7 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

8 EXAMINATION

9 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

10 Q Thank you. Please state your name and spell
11 it for the record.

12 A Yes. Anthony Shirk, A-N-T-H-O-N-Y
13 S-H-I-R-K.

14 Q Thank you. And please provide your address,
15 including the township.

16 A Yes. I currently live at 42 North McKinley
17 Avenue in Athens, Ohio, but I am representing my
18 family, who is selling property.

19 Q Thank you. And you may proceed.

20 A Thank you, Your Honor.

21 So I have -- I have a list of points here
22 that I want to start with to kind of create a series
23 of events.

24 County Commissioner Jay Wippel was appointed
25 as a member of the Ohio Power State Board for the

1 purposes of this case. After he became an ad hoc
2 voting member, he was the deciding vote in the county
3 resolution opposing the project. I note that the
4 resolution did not raise any specific reason for
5 opposition against this project. It was just against
6 solar.

7 Commissioner Wippel refused to meet with the
8 project and public meetings both before and after
9 voting against the project. He refused to meet with
10 the project on the basis that he is an ad hoc voting
11 member of the OPSB, but then, he voted against the
12 project as a county commissioner. How could his
13 decision to vote against the project be informed if he
14 refused to meet with the project?

15 The OPSB staff was made aware of these
16 actions. However, the staff reports cited the county
17 resolution as a reason to recommend denial of the
18 project, but not a word was said about the ad hoc
19 member's vote.

20 I have the following documents for the
21 Chair. I'll give them after I'm done. The county
22 commissioner meeting minutes, showing Commissioner
23 Wippel as recusing himself from meeting with the
24 project during public commissioner meetings both
25 before and after voting on the resolution against the

1 project.

2 The commissioner is trying to tell me what I
3 can do with my land. He was the deciding vote on the
4 resolution against the project, but he would refuse to
5 meet with the project. How could this decision be
6 informed? And yet the OPSB staff endorsed this
7 resolution, and the commissioner is going to be a
8 judge on the sitting board later in the case as well.
9 How am I getting a fair shake as a landowner and my
10 rights as my family trying to sell the land, land that
11 we've had in our family for 150-plus years?

12 The OPSB is supposed to investigate the
13 project, not simply rely on local politicians who
14 won't meet with us.

15 And I have everything here that I'll -- I'll
16 leave with you. Thank you.

17 Q Thank you very much.

18 THE COURT: Any questions?

19 MS. SHEELY: No. Thank you.

20 THE COURT: Thank you.

21 Next, we have Dan Sime and then, after
22 Mr. Sime, Dave Horning.

23 Welcome.

24 MR. SIME: Thank you.

25 THE COURT: Please raise your right

1 hand.

2 WHEREUPON,

3 DAN SIME

4 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
5 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
6 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

7 EXAMINATION

8 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

9 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
10 for the record.

11 A My name is Dan Sime, D-A-N S-I-M-E. Reside
12 at 229 South Water Street, Williamsport, Ohio.

13 Q And Mr. Sime, could you speak up just maybe
14 a little bit or get a little closer to the microphone?

15 A Okay. Sorry.

16 Q Thank you.

17 A Can you hear me?

18 Q Yes.

19 A Okay.

20 Q That's much better. Thank you so much.
21 Please provide your address, including township.

22 A South Water Street, Williamsport, Ohio, Deer
23 Creek Township.

24 Q Thank you. And do you reside or work within
25 the project area?

1 A Reside.

2 Q Thank you. Please proceed.

3 A Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for
4 allowing me the opportunity to speak this evening.

5 Again, my name is Dan Sime. I live close to
6 the proposed project area. In addition to being a
7 stakeholder as a member of the community, I am one of
8 many members of the International Brotherhood of
9 Electrical Workers, Local 683, that reside in Pickaway
10 County.

11 The approval of the Scioto Solar Farm [sic]
12 would give myself and other Pickaway County
13 construction workers a chance to work closer to home
14 and enrich the local community in a number of ways.
15 Tax revenue generated from Scioto Farms Solar is
16 expected to provide necessary funding for the local
17 schools, necessary infrastructure projects in our
18 community. It is my opinion that this additional
19 revenue will create more jobs in addition to initial
20 hundred of direct jobs from the project.

21 As long -- as a longtime Pickaway County
22 resident, I am always concerned about the revenue in
23 our small community for essential services. The
24 Scioto Farms project will provide reliable, steady
25 revenue for essential services like the fire

1 department and emergency medical services.

2 I am proud to support the Scioto Farms Solar
3 Project, the jobs, the revenue, improvement to our
4 community. And that's it.

5 Thank you for your time.

6 Q Thank you very much.

7 THE COURT: Any questions?

8 MS. SHEELY: No. Thank you, Judge.

9 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I don't.

10 THE COURT: Next, we have Dave Horning
11 and, then, after him, Connie Kiser.

12 Please raise your right hand.

13 MR. HORNING: Oh.

14 WHEREUPON,

15 DAVE HORNING

16 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
17 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
18 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

19 EXAMINATION

20 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

21 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
22 for the record, sir.

23 A My name is Dave Horning, H-O-R-N-I-N-G. I
24 live at 569 Plaza Drive in Circleville, Ohio 43113.

25 Q And do you work or reside within the project

1 area?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. You may proceed.

4 A I am opposed to further construction of
5 industrial solar power on farmland in Pickaway County
6 or anywhere in Ohio. My reasons are, one, we are in
7 the midst of a food shortage, and we need every square
8 inch of Pickaway County farmland for food. And, two,
9 solar power produces hazardous waste, and, three, new
10 technology for green energy will soon render solar
11 power obsolete.

12 Inc. Magazine quoted Jeff Brown -- Jeff
13 Bezos, the founder of Amazon, as saying, quote,
14 "Highly intelligent people frequently revise their
15 opinions when new information becomes available."
16 Unquote.

17 I am asking the Ohio Power Siting Board to
18 issue a moratorium on any further construction of
19 industrial solar power in Ohio based on new
20 information. The first piece of new information is
21 the war in Ukraine. Although it's been going on for
22 months, it's new in terms of when this industrial
23 solar project first started. The -- the Ukrainians
24 have not planted wheat this spring, which means that
25 15 percent of the world's supply of wheat has

1 disappeared. Just yesterday, President Biden warned
2 of food shortages due to the Russian invasion, quote,
3 "It's going to get real. Both Russia and Ukraine have
4 been the breadbasket of Europe in terms of wheat."
5 Unquote.

6 Secondly, solar power is an environmental
7 disaster. This is not new information. There are
8 approximately 25 grams of cadmium in each large solar
9 panel. Cadmium leaches from broken panels damaged
10 during natural events, hailstorms, tornadoes, and
11 decommissioning. Recycling decommissioned solar
12 panels costs more than the economic value of the
13 materials recovered. However, disposable
14 decommissioned solar panels in landfills is, quote,
15 "not recommended in case -- break, and toxic materials
16 such as cadmium leach into the soil." Unquote.
17 Nevertheless, our landfills are where most obsolete
18 solar panels wind up. This is how OSHA describes
19 cadmium: "Cadmium is highly toxic and can cause
20 cancer. It targets the body's cardiovascular, renal,
21 gastrointestinal, neurological, reproductive, and
22 respiratory systems." Or, as my friend, Laura
23 Schweitzer, would say, it will mess you up.

24 Lastly, and this is the second piece of new
25 information, which was announced just yesterday. Jeff

1 Bezos was investing 300 million pounds, British, in
2 General Fusion, a committee and private company, to
3 create limitless energy from nuclear fusion. The
4 company will test its magnetized target fusion
5 technology, which replicates the energy process of the
6 sun. Scientists at EnergyProfessionals.com say that
7 fusion is green energy. Quote. "Fusion power could
8 produce inexhaustible clean power. It uses seawater
9 as its fuel and would produce no greenhouse gas
10 admissions." Unquote.

11 Now, my final comment I would like to make
12 is about the Yellowbud project in Ross County. I
13 visited the recorder's office in Ross County. The
14 Ross County court -- court reporter was very helpful.
15 I got a copy of the lease that was filed by the solar
16 power company on the farmland of the farm owners, and
17 it says on the back that without the need for a
18 farmer's commission, the solar power company can sell,
19 convey, lease, assign to a mortgage that real estate
20 due to that.

21 So what -- the financial process works this
22 way. The power company doesn't really have any money,
23 so what they do is they go to the bank and acquire the
24 money to build the solar panels. The bank then needs
25 a mortgage. They need collateral for their -- their

1 loan. They get the collateral from the entire parcel
2 of farmland that that farmer has. If that process
3 ever ceases to be possible, the power company will
4 disappear, but the bank will still be in business and
5 will foreclose on the entire parcel of farmland and
6 take that farm away from the farmer.

7 So this is in the lease, and I'll leave a
8 copy of this lease that is public record. Now, I
9 don't know if this law firm is going to write a
10 similar lease, but you've got to be very careful and
11 hire an attorney to read this. I know people don't
12 like to hire an attorney until there's a problem, but
13 before you sign anything, hire an attorney that can
14 read the lease presented to you.

15 Thank you very much.

16 Q Thank you very much, Mr. Horning.

17 THE COURT: Any questions?

18 MS. SHEELY: No.

19 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Your Honor.

20 THE COURT: Next, I have Connie Kiser
21 and, following her, April Kiser.

22 Ms. Kiser, please raise your right
23 hand.

24 //

25 //

1 WHEREUPON,

2 CONNIE KISER

3 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

6 EXAMINATION

7 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

8 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
9 for the record.

10 A Connie Kiser, C-O-N-N-I-E K-I-S-E-R.

11 Q Thank you. And your address with the
12 township, please.

13 A 27061 Westfall Road, Circleville, Ohio,
14 Wayne Township.

15 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
16 the project?

17 A Reside. Thank you.

18 Q Thank you very much. You may proceed.

19 A Thank you.

20 I'm a lifelong resident of Pickaway County,
21 which -- 39 years of them have been spent in Wayne
22 Township, where my husband was born and raised. My
23 husband and I have raised three children on the farm
24 across from the proposed site on Westfall Road.

25 This project will negatively impact the

1 daily lives of Wayne Township residents in many ways,
2 first, the environmental implications that we as
3 residents are not aware of. The property value will
4 decrease. The construction site would be considerably
5 more dangerous to our roads, and if this project is
6 approved, who will repair the damage? The loss of
7 habitat for the wildlife is very concerning. The
8 local farmers will lose some of the farm ground, which
9 is their livelihood.

10 For those who have not taken their spring
11 drive, please do so on -- south on 104 or Westfall
12 Road to see the project known as Yellowbud Solar to
13 see the impact on the farmland that has resulted with
14 this project. Remember this is what our farms will
15 soon look like.

16 Thank you.

17 Q Thank you very much, Ms. Kiser.

18 THE COURT: Any questions?

19 MS. SHEELY: No. Thank you.

20 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No.

21 THE COURT: Please raise your right
22 hand.

23 //

24 //

25 //

1 WHEREUPON,

2 APRIL KISER

3 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

6 EXAMINATION

7 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

8 Q Please state and spell your name for the
9 record.

10 A I am April Kiser, A-P-R-I-L K-I-S-E-R.

11 Q Thank you. And your address with the
12 township, please.

13 A 26845 Immell Road in Circleville, Wayne
14 Township.

15 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
16 the project area?

17 A I reside.

18 Q Thank you. You may proceed.

19 A My husband and I spent several years
20 planning and saving to build our forever home in Wayne
21 Township. He grew up there. We're half a mile from
22 the proposed site, you know. It's a big, dark cloud
23 over our happy move. We have been looking forward to
24 this for some time, and, you know, to find out that
25 there is a huge solar field proposed, you know, right

1 down the road is very concerning.

2 Like many people that have spoken, we're
3 really concerned about the -- the water. We rely on
4 well water. If that's contaminated, we have nothing
5 else. We have no other options, you know.

6 There are a lot of people who are opposed to
7 this, the county commissioners, township trustees, the
8 county emergency management agency, you know, the
9 county fire chiefs association. State Senator Bob
10 Peterson wrote an opposition on the website, you know.
11 Of the 58 public comments on the site, only five were
12 for or -- were for the -- the project, you know.

13 The Pickaway County is a farming community.
14 It's the livelihood of most of the people out there.
15 It's zoned for farmland, you know. Even now, if you
16 want to buy a parcel of land, you have to buy ten
17 acres. It's not, you know -- this development that
18 people are talking about, it's not as easy as what
19 they say. It's not a done deal. If this doesn't go
20 through, this is going to be developed. It's, you
21 know -- we have zoning in place for this reason. Why
22 we moved out there --

23 I just really encourage you to deny this
24 project. Thank you.

25 Q Thank you, Ms. Kiser.

1 THE COURT: Any questions?

2 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Your Honor.

3 MS. SHEELY: No.

4 THE COURT: Next, I have Kim Davey and
5 then, following, Byron Rose.

6 Welcome, Ms. Davey. Please raise your
7 right hand.

8 WHEREUPON,

9 KIM DAVEY

10 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
11 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
12 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

13 EXAMINATION

14 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

15 Q Can you please state and spell your name for
16 the record?

17 A Kim Davey, K-I-M D-A-V-E-Y.

18 Q Thank you. And please provide your address
19 with the township.

20 A 24235 Mouser Road, New Holland, Ohio, Perry
21 Township.

22 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
23 the project area?

24 A I do not, within the site of the project.
25 No, ma'am.

1 Q Thank you. You may proceed.

2 A Okay. First of all, I would like to say
3 that I have written several letters to the Ohio Power
4 Siting Board, beginning in 2019 when the Atlanta
5 Project was proposed, also to the county commissioners
6 and to the township trustees in Perry Township at that
7 time.

8 We also -- three of us met with the
9 commissioners in October of 2019 as well. At that
10 time, the commissioners seemed to be all for the
11 project because, I think, Atlanta was the only one
12 proposed at that time. That project has been approved
13 and was supposed to have been completed by this time.
14 It has not even been started yet. Thank goodness. I
15 do not know why that project hasn't been started, but
16 I'm glad that it hasn't.

17 We -- my parents own a farm within just half
18 a mile of where this project will be. And it is not
19 something -- after traveling to the Yellowbud site and
20 seeing what that looks like, it is not something that
21 anybody would want to see. However, that was not my
22 main concern in 2019, and it's still not my main
23 concern in 2022.

24 My main concern is about the farmland. So
25 many people already have spoken about how much acreage

1 it is going to take -- this is going to take in
2 Pickaway County, and I feel like our county has always
3 been an agricultural county. And I know that some
4 people look at that as being old-fashioned, but it
5 does need to be there because of the food that we
6 need, the job that it creates that people sort of
7 forget about.

8 When I spoke at the hearing for the Atlanta
9 project when it was online or on Zoom, I -- I said
10 then, and I still believe it now, that farmers
11 sometimes succumb to these kinds of projects. And
12 they are not farms. Nothing grows on them. I wish
13 the Power Siting Board would change that to solar
14 projects instead of solar farms. Farms are where you
15 plant seed, grow crops, raise livestock. Industrial
16 solar projects are not farms.

17 But anyway, the -- the projects affect so
18 many other jobs, and they don't bring in a lot of
19 jobs. There's a few jobs, maybe more jobs than the
20 young man was talking about, electrical or
21 construction jobs and things going on while they're
22 building. And yes. Maybe. But when it's done,
23 there's only a few. Less than ten is what I've been
24 told on other projects. So that does not create jobs,
25 and I'm sure that there are more people that are going

1 to lose money from the jobs they currently have in
2 agriculture because of these projects.

3 Long-term effects, when the young man said
4 he would be 62 when this project, these 30-year, 40-
5 year leases are over, I probably will not even be on
6 this earth at that time, and I hope that I'm wrong. I
7 said this to the county commissioners in 2019.

8 I hope that I'm proven wrong, that these
9 projects really are for the good of everybody, but I
10 can't see that they are. There's been too many things
11 from people that are experts in solar. I'm not
12 against solar on someone's house. If they want to do
13 it, that's fine, but when you take all of this and
14 the -- the contamination, for lack of a better word,
15 that's going to happen with this, it's not going to be
16 good.

17 And the -- and the power companies that are
18 doing it may not be around to truly pay the farmers.
19 I -- I really do feel badly for farmers that feel like
20 this is just the only way that they can retire or have
21 income. My husband and I used to farm full-time. We
22 are retired now. My husband -- we had to sell some of
23 our farm ground because of financial issues, but we
24 sold it to another farmer. And we're hoping that that
25 farmer does not succumb to solar projects because it

1 does need to be farmed. It's prime farmland.

2 That's what I would like to say, and I would
3 really hope that the Power Siting Board -- I'm
4 thankful that the commissioners have seemed to change
5 their stance on this. I know some of the township
6 trustees have. They're the people in power that we
7 elect, and I'm hoping that they will continue to
8 really look these over and -- and do the right thing
9 for the majority of the people in our county and
10 across the state.

11 Thank you.

12 Q Thank you, Ms. Davey.

13 THE COURT: Any questions?

14 Next, I have Byron Rose and then,
15 following him, Kay Swaney.

16 Mr. Rose, please raise your right hand.
17 WHEREUPON,

18 BYRON ROSE
19 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
20 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
21 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

22 EXAMINATION

23 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

24 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
25 for the record.

1 A My name is Byron Rose, spelled R-O-S-E.
2 First name is Byron, B-Y-R-O-N.

3 Q Thank you. And your address?

4 A And address is 6480 Hatfield Road,
5 Williamsport, Ohio, Deer Creek Township.

6 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
7 the project area?

8 A I own a farm in Deer Creek Township.

9 Q Thank you. You may proceed, Mr. Rose.

10 A Yeah. I am Byron Rose. I'm a real estate
11 broker, and I look at things a little differently than
12 many people are talking about tonight.

13 Scioto Solar is just a segment of what we're
14 facing. I want to talk about Gestalt psychology, and
15 that's when the whole is greater than the sum of the
16 parts. We had six solar companies coming to this
17 area, some in Ross County, some in Pickaway County.
18 On the chart there, you'll see a flow chart, showing
19 the different solar companies, which are six right
20 now, two of them in Ross County. The rest are in
21 Pickaway County. Just let me see here.

22 Q And Mr. Rose, just so the record is clear,
23 this chart that you are holding up depicts all of the
24 proposed projects?

25 A It depicts all six projects. That equates

1 to 110. Excuse me. 110 -- get it right here. 10,140
2 acres to get it exactly right.

3 Q Thank you.

4 A And that includes the six different solar
5 companies that are trying to come into this area.

6 This next chart shows the square miles that
7 will be occupied by these solar companies coming into
8 this area, and to put it in perspective, the six
9 different solar companies equate to enough square
10 miles that's more than twice the area of the city of
11 Circleville. Now, that's a big area, and we've broken
12 it down. You'll get charts and handouts to give the
13 total acreage, the square miles, and it's all broken
14 down.

15 But we need to look at the total, not just
16 Scioto Solar. It's one of many, so what I'm saying is
17 broaden your perspective and look at the density.
18 You're really killing our agriculture area with the
19 density of solar, and we can't survive. This solar
20 should not be on agricultural farmland, period. I
21 don't know how I could make this any better. There is
22 no more land.

23 Q Thank you.

24 THE COURT: As much as I would like to
25 provide everyone an opportunity for applause if you

1 agree, we are trying to get through as many people as
2 we can, so if we could limit applause for the
3 conclusion of the hearing, we would definitely
4 appreciate it. And --

5 THE WITNESS: And my point is, if we
6 don't save farmland, where are you going to grow food?
7 It doesn't come from Kroger. It comes from Pickaway
8 County, Ross County agricultural farmland, and it
9 needs to stop. Right now, we're seeing Ukraine, and
10 it was brought up earlier, the grain shortage. The
11 G7, in their latest report, states that there is a
12 problem with food shortage in the world. Ukraine and
13 Russia are going to be way below their productivity
14 this year, and we must ensure farmland is saved for
15 the future.

16 Thank you.

17 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

18 Q Thank you. And Mr. Rose, did you say that
19 you had smaller versions of these printouts?

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. It's all
21 right there. There's three copies.

22 THE COURT: Thank you so much. Thank
23 you. We appreciate that. Thank you.

24 Any questions?

25 MS. SHEELY: Nothing.

1 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Nothing. Thank you.

2 THE COURT: Next, I have Kay Swaney and
3 then, following Ms. Swaney, Justin Barnes.

4 Welcome, Ms. Swaney. Can you please
5 raise your right hand?

6 WHEREUPON,

7 KAY SWANEY
8 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
9 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
10 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

11 EXAMINATION

12 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

13 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
14 for the record.

15 A Kay Swaney, K-A-Y S-W-A-N-E-Y.

16 Q Thank --

17 A My address is 23490 Chillicothe Pike,
18 Williamsport in Deer Creek Township. I am very much
19 adjacent to another project but not this one.

20 Q Thank you. You may proceed.

21 A I would agree with many of the other
22 concerns that people have talked about from the
23 farmland, potential pollution. My focus and my
24 comments are going to be related to the property
25 values.

1 I live right across the road from what's
2 going to be another project, and I've read stories
3 about property values, the percentages. Some of them
4 say there's no loss of property value, but to me, when
5 I -- I sent these pictures in with one of my letters
6 to the Power Siting Board. And I live where there's
7 nothing to the west of me, so I see beautiful sunsets
8 all the time. I don't like it sometimes when the corn
9 gets tall, and I can't see. I'll put up with the
10 corn, but this is one of the pictures that I
11 submitted. That -- these are a couple of pictures
12 of -- from my front porch, looking at the sunset,
13 which is pretty amazing, and this is a picture from
14 about a year ago from the Yellowbud project.

15 The property across from me is intended to
16 be one of the staging areas, which is mostly mud in
17 this part of the country. This is what my view will
18 potentially look like with the project with the
19 staging area across from me.

20 It just -- all the other reasons for loss of
21 farmland, but also, I've lived there over 40 years.
22 I've worked hard to maintain the property. I was
23 trying so hard not to get emotional. Sorry.

24 Q Take your time.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're doing

1 great.

2 THE WITNESS: Just the sheer thought
3 that I could use 60 percent of my property value with
4 my intent to pass this in my inheritance for my
5 daughter and my grandson -- I keep making myself not
6 go down and look at the Yellowbud project. But every
7 time I do, I just get sick to my stomach of what
8 that's going to look like in my front yard.

9 I'm just asking, please, to not let
10 these solar projects come take any more of the
11 property from -- from Pickaway County. Thank you.

12 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

13 Q Thank you very much, Ms. Swaney. And Ms.
14 Swaney, do you recall the date of the letter that you
15 sent in the pictures?

16 A I actually have sent three. This one was
17 probably in -- this was -- one of them was in
18 December. I just looked it up to see. One was in
19 February. I think the other one was maybe April, but
20 there's -- I saw -- I looked on the website. And all
21 three of them were posted out there, and the pictures
22 are there. But I'll leave these here.

23 Q Wonderful. Thank you so much.

24 THE COURT: Any questions?

25 Mr. Barnes?

1 MR. BARNES: Yes.

2 THE COURT: Please raise your right
3 hand.

4 WHEREUPON,

5 JUSTIN BARNES

6 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
7 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
8 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

9 EXAMINATION

10 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

11 Q Thank you. Please state your name and spell
12 it for the record, please.

13 A Justin Barnes, J-U-S-T-I-N B-A-R-N-E-S.
14 20245 Pherson Pike, Williamsport in Monroe Township.

15 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
16 the project area?

17 A No.

18 Q Thank you.

19 A I also -- same as Kay, I am an adjacent
20 owner near the Chipmunk project, Pickaway County as
21 well.

22 So we -- we hear a lot about the loss of
23 farmland and property values, and those too are
24 concerns that I have, how it affects people. There is
25 a difference, and you can see from other projects

1 around the state, the one that would offset
2 agricultural land, what it does to the area.

3 And you can see that if you look up the
4 Dixon Run Solar Project in Jackson County. It was on
5 a reclaimed coal field. So as you know, you can write
6 a letter into the Ohio Power Siting Board for review.
7 In that project, there were a grand total of four --
8 four people who wrote a letter of opposition to that
9 project. It's a good location; okay? There's a big
10 difference. It's not agricultural land that they're
11 losing.

12 The Nottingham Solar Project in Harrison
13 County, also on a reclaimed -- a coal mine, nobody
14 opposes that project. That's a great location as
15 well.

16 The reason the, like -- the solar coming to
17 an agriculturally zoned area does provide jobs, but
18 it's important to mention that it offsets much more
19 jobs. The farmland trickles down really well through
20 the community. It would be a loss of revenue and jobs
21 for the area -- for our area, the people living there.

22 So in my letter, the last one I wrote
23 regarding the Chipmunk project, I detailed some of the
24 specifics, the comparison of the solar and the
25 farmland.

1 So we -- as a landowner, I choose to live in
2 an area that is zoned agricultural. That is an
3 investment. It's a protection that we have from an
4 industrial use. And if you -- outside of that, you
5 can apply for a variance that would get voted on in
6 our townships, and so people, as landowners, we have
7 that protection. And I think that's important.

8 Regarding some of the property values, there
9 is a comprehensive study the University of Texas put
10 out. On Page 41 of that study, they had a comparison
11 of median incomes near solar projects. They took
12 every 100 megawatt solar facility in the United
13 States, and the median income was half of the national
14 average, the median income around the projects. So
15 there's probably a few reasons that happens, but I
16 don't think there's any question. The area is kind of
17 a depressed area. It's, like, and part of that has --
18 would be it's a less desirable land use than farming
19 in our case. For most of the -- most of the townships
20 in Pickaway County are zoned for agriculture.

21 So that's all I have.

22 Q Thank you very much.

23 THE COURT: Any questions?

24 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No. Thank you.

25 THE COURT: Next, I have Paula Metzger,

1 followed by Marian Garner.

2 Ms. Metzger, please raise your right
3 hand.

4 WHEREUPON,

5 PAULA METZGER

6 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
7 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
8 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

9 EXAMINATION

10 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

11 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your
12 name.

13 A Paula Metzger, P-A-U-L-A M-E-T-Z-G-E-R.

14 Q And your address with the township, please.

15 A 4127 Dungan Road. That's D-U-N-G-A-N, and
16 that's in Wayne Township.

17 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
18 the project area?

19 A I live there.

20 Q Thank you very much. You may begin with
21 your testimony.

22 A Our family is a landowner whose land borders
23 nearly the entire western edge of this proposed
24 facility.

25 Can you hear me okay? Can you hear me okay?

1 Q Yes. Thank you.

2 A We have three family homes and our farm shop
3 in this immediate vicinity. There are many issues I'd
4 like to address, but because of the constraints of
5 time, I'm just focusing on two.

6 The first is the viewshed. Under the Ohio
7 Administrative Code, it states for the applicant to
8 describe the existing landscape and evaluate its
9 scenic quality, list indications of the visual
10 preferences of the community.

11 The many signatures on our Township Petition
12 of Opposition, the many letters of Wayne Township
13 residents opposing this project, and the No Solar on
14 Farmland signs planted on those properties in the area
15 are evidence to the preferences of this community. I
16 think it's important for you to know the local
17 community because your decision will impact their
18 lives forever.

19 This area in Wayne Township is home to
20 mostly generational families. In keeping with your
21 rules of respecting cultures and contributions, you
22 need to consider these families.

23 As a teacher, I have had many of these kids
24 in class, and now, at least, seven of them have
25 returned to the area to build their own homes and

1 raise their families in the serene countryside where
2 they grew up. I have seen through the years the
3 tremendous amount of giving that these families have
4 donated to the great community. I have seen these
5 families give thousands of volunteer hours, helping in
6 their child's classroom, working with the PTB, being
7 on the school board, working tirelessly on fundraisers
8 to support the band boosters, the sports programs, the
9 academic scholarships. They have given their energy
10 to support 4-H, to serve on the fair board, to work
11 towards the improvement of the new fairgrounds that
12 the entire state enjoys. The list continues with
13 hours given in local food pantries, the women's
14 shelter, youth programs, and, of course, Pumpkin Show.
15 I could tell you the individual contributions of all
16 these families, but time does not allow for this. I
17 would like to invite you for a personal tour. I would
18 like to drive you around Wayne Township and explain to
19 you the contributions of each family.

20 Furthermore, the applicants are required to
21 do an analysis of the scenic quality in the area.
22 Stantec, the firm hired by Candela, stated several
23 times in their letter submitted December 13th that the
24 placement of solar modules would alter the rural
25 character. Their conclusion, and I quote, "The

1 presence of the project would be visually unique to
2 the local landscape. The solar modules would be
3 visible and sustained use. That means, 24/7, near
4 residences and alter the area's rural, agricultural
5 character."

6 I would also like to note that the plan will
7 reach a height of 20 feet at the maximum extension.
8 That's at sunrise and sunset, so goodbye, country
9 sunrise. I'm five-two. Twenty feet is nearly four
10 times my height. Is this the view you dream of from
11 your home?

12 The very fact that the solar companies are
13 required to submit a mitigation plan and vegetative
14 screening is additional evidence that this is not an
15 upgrade for the immediate area.

16 Secondly, I want to speak to your mission
17 statement, which quotes, "Protecting the environment
18 and land use and minimizing impacts detrimental to the
19 continued use of productive agricultural land." The
20 farmers of Wayne Township and throughout Pickaway
21 County are ever cognizant about best practices and
22 work hard to promote soil health and to protect the
23 environment. Because of their great care and
24 expertise, the farmers who actually farm these
25 parcels, not the landowners, these farmers had record

1 yields in 2021.

2 In contrast to that, we have seen firsthand
3 the destruction of the topsoil during the installation
4 of these solar facilities. Your mission statement is
5 absolutely ignored during the construction period.
6 Massive equipment is grating the land and compacting
7 the soil, and that is the reality of the situation.
8 To claim that this same land can return to productive
9 farmland is highly improbable. We have seen this
10 personally because the construction of the 2,000-acre
11 Yellowbud project is also in our immediate area. Hold
12 on.

13 Q And Ms. Metzger, I --

14 A In closing, I am closing.

15 Q Go ahead.

16 A I hope you will search your heart for what
17 is right. Your decision will impact every single
18 resident, residents who have dedicated their lives to
19 the betterment of the community. Your decision will
20 impact the farmers of Pickaway County and all the
21 ag-related businesses. The qualities of a good
22 decision are love, peace, justice, and integrity. I
23 hope those will guide you. Responsible solar should
24 not lead to utter destruction and heartbreak.

25 Thank you.

1 Q Thank you very much.

2 THE COURT: Any questions?

3 THE WITNESS: Where do I --

4 THE COURT: You could set it right up
5 here, Ms. Metzger. Thank you very much.

6 Next, we have Marian Garner, followed
7 by Michael Reily Kiser.

8 Okay. Ms. Garner?

9 MS. GARNER: I'm here.

10 THE COURT: Hi there.

11 WHEREUPON,

12 MARIAN GARNER

13 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
14 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
15 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

16 EXAMINATION

17 THE COURT: Thank you. And if you as
18 well as everyone following Ms. Garner could speak into
19 the microphone just a little bit louder, our court
20 reporter is having a little bit of trouble hearing
21 testimony this evening.

22 THE WITNESS: Okay. Tell me if you can
23 hear me. Is that okay? Marian, M-A-R-I-A-N, Garner,
24 G-A-R-N-E-R. 19428 Hill Road, Circleville, Jackson
25 Township.

1 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

2 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
3 the project area?

4 A No.

5 Q Thank you. You may proceed, Ms. Garner.

6 A Well, as so many other people have presented
7 many, many facts, the fact that I wanted to touch on
8 is the problem of recycling these panels. I have an
9 article from InterestingEngineering.com, a science --
10 science article I'll give you up there, so I'm just
11 going to quote one part of it. When you read over
12 it -- and anyone in the audience can look this up as
13 well. It just blows your mind, the facts that are in
14 this article, and they're facts. They're not just
15 opinions.

16 It's not just, you know -- we -- we're not
17 even going to be affected by this solar project. We
18 just feel like it's not good for our community and the
19 future of our world, our country, our children, our
20 grandchildren, what's going to go in the ground. It's
21 just something we have to really think about.

22 So one of the things I'll quote in this
23 article, it's by the International Renewable Energy
24 Agency, and they say they predict around 78 million
25 metric tons of solar panels will likely have reached

1 the end of their lives by 2050. Something will need
2 to be done with all this waste. While most
3 electronics can be recycled relatively safely, the
4 toxic contents of solar panels are going to become a
5 real problem if another reliable method of safely
6 decommissioning old panels is found. If not, most of
7 these panels, as today, may simply end up in landfills
8 if they're allowed to be in landfills.

9 I just urge you to think long and hard and
10 really investigate all of the facts and consider
11 what's best for this community. Thank you.

12 Q Thank you.

13 THE COURT: Any questions?

14 MS. SHEELY: Nothing.

15 THE COURT: Thank you very much, Ms.
16 Garner.

17 THE WITNESS: Sure.

18 THE COURT: Next, I have Michael Kiser,
19 followed by T.J. Ebenhack.

20 Mr. Kiser.

21 WHEREUPON,

22 MICHAEL REILY KISER

23 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
24 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
25 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

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EXAMINATION

BY JUDGE ADDISON:

Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name for the record.

A Michael Reily Kiser, M-I-C-H-A-E-L, Reily, R-E-I-L-Y, last name, Kiser, K-I-S-E-R.

Q Thank you. And could you please provide your address with the township?

A 915 City Park Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43206.

Q Thank you. You may proceed.

A All right. Wonderful.

Good evening, everyone. I'm here tonight to share my concerns with Scioto -- Scioto -- sorry. Scioto Farms Solar Project and the community it affects. That community is Wayne Township.

Why do I care about Wayne Township? I -- I was born there 29 years ago. I resided there for 25 years. My mother currently resides there. My father died there. My brother and sister-in-law currently reside there, and I plan on returning someday.

Why else do I care about this community? This community is unlike any other. For those -- and a lot of familiar faces I see in this crowd know exactly what I'm talking about. Some of those familiar faces I call uncle, even though there's no

1 blood relation. It's a community that's driven by
2 farmers, a community that truly lives by "help thy
3 neighbor." I thought this was the case with
4 everywhere, growing up in this community. As I
5 quickly found out when I left this community, that is
6 not the case.

7 This is also a community that wanted to keep
8 this reputation, and that's why they put in the zoning
9 laws. Ten acres must be purchased at one time to
10 prevent subdivisions from being built, preventing this
11 perfect landscape that we have in the southwest part
12 of this diverse county that we also have, keep it
13 intact. And that's why we all live there. That's why
14 my family settled there over 70 years ago.

15 Now, I also look around this room. I see a
16 lot of faces that aren't familiar. They aren't so
17 familiar. What do they think of this project? I want
18 to put myself in their shoes. One, it's progress for
19 man. We're getting something done. Two, they
20 probably look at it. It's clean air. Three, and
21 we've heard this said for people not opposing this,
22 money for schools. For those people, I want to give
23 my perspective as someone who came from that
24 community, what I think of those. Those are valid
25 points on your end, but on my end, it's progress of

1 man tearing apart one of the best communities, one of
2 the only communities left that truly values their
3 neighbor. I think not.

4 Is this clean energy? Factually, and a lot
5 of people have presented this already this evening.
6 Nothing about this is clean. To give the testimonial
7 of one of our fine teachers here at Circleville High
8 School, where I went, he teaches a sustainability
9 class. About a month ago, he was driving out past our
10 farm, which is directly across from this project, and
11 sends me a picture of our farm, and we were bantering
12 back and forth, you know. "What are you doing out
13 there?" And then, I finished with, "It's God's
14 country." He replies with, "Yep. Until you hit Ross
15 County," referring to the Yellowbud project. So not
16 only does he oppose "of" it. This is a person that is
17 in sustainability, teaching it to our kids here in
18 Circleville, Ohio, and he understands how not clean
19 energy this is, how not clean it is to the community,
20 and a multitude of factors.

21 Lastly, money -- money for the schools
22 sounds great. Sales 101, right? Anytime that you've
23 got a product people don't want to buy, flash them
24 with the big benefit. What's easier than money for
25 schools? The easiest example that I can think of for

1 this is the Ohio lottery. Have you seen one
2 commercial for the Ohio lottery? What do they show?
3 Money for schools, kids in the classroom. What don't
4 they show? Circleville Speedway, where you can't get
5 to the counter because people are repeatedly buying
6 lotto tickets because they have an addiction and
7 spending all of their money.

8 So I strongly oppose this project and hope
9 that the Power Siting Board of Ohio does as well to
10 keep this wonderful community intact.

11 Thank you.

12 Q Thank you very much.

13 THE COURT: Questions? Questions?

14 Next, I have T.J. Ebenhack, followed by
15 Tom Spring.

16 Good evening. Please raise your right
17 hand.

18 WHEREUPON,

19 THOMAS EBENHACK

20 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
21 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
22 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

23 EXAMINATION

24 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

25 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name

1 for the record.

2 A Thomas J. Ebenhack, T-H-O-M-A-S, J,
3 E-B-E-N-H-A-C-K.

4 Q Thank you. And can you please provide your
5 address with the township?

6 A 2453 Fair Avenue, Bexley, Ohio 43209.

7 Q Thank you. You may proceed.

8 A Hi. My name is T.J. Ebenhack. I'm opposed
9 to the massive solar projects on usable farmland. Our
10 farm sits immediately adjacent to the site of the
11 solar project on the south side.

12 Full disclosure, we have a portion of our
13 farm in the Yellowbud Solar Project, which we really
14 regret. We signed up, thinking that we were doing
15 something green. The project that we were in was
16 supposed to be a small Appalachian County product that
17 would add clean supplemental power to the new
18 powerlines that had been added on Westfall Road. This
19 project was proposed to be geared up towards a more
20 unusable and less productive farmland. We signed up
21 only a portion that was not as productive and
22 relatively invisible except to us.

23 We now see how different this is, as the
24 project swelled way beyond those seven to 800 acres.
25 We see the land stripped of topsoil, which can't be

1 put back. We also, through research, now realize not
2 only the lack of productivity of solar, which we've
3 actually seen firsthand with the solar that we
4 actually put on one of our barns, the problems with
5 the breakdown of solar panels over time, the damage to
6 wildlife and the patterns that they have with this
7 large of a project.

8 The solar or the site of the solar -- we've
9 noticed, as the solar -- as a -- they keep claiming
10 that the Scioto one is not going to be the same.
11 It'll be different, though I have a hard time
12 believing this, as we see the same people from our
13 project moving over part of the Scioto one as well.
14 And all the things that they told us will probably
15 become true, too.

16 This additional project will completely kill
17 the use of great farmland. That is anything but poor
18 use of Appalachian countryside. As these projects
19 overrun our vast farmland, we will lose one of our
20 county's best industries.

21 My family has established our -- our produce
22 operation on our 120-year-old farm and relies on
23 agrotourism, which will lose its great experience as
24 the land turns to vast industrial fields of solar
25 panels.

1 It's kind of funny how all of the landowners
2 of this project are nonfarming absentee landowners.

3 In addition, we have no idea of the wildlife
4 impact of this must solar in such a close proximity
5 and what it will have overtime, also the runoff and
6 the leaching from these -- this many panels. We have
7 no idea of the long-term effects that this will have,
8 yet we've rushed to do this in these large projects
9 all over the county.

10 Thank you.

11 Q Thank you very much.

12 THE COURT: Questions?

13 Oh. Mr. Ebenhack, I'm so sorry.
14 Counsel for the applicant does have one question or
15 maybe a few. Thank you.

16 Ms. Sheely?

17 MS. SHEELY: Yeah. I just have one
18 question. I wanted to clarify.

19 THE COURT: Oh.

20 MS. SHEELY: Mr. Ebenhack, right there.

21 THE COURT: Mr. Ebenhack, I'm sorry.

22 Counsel does have one question.

23 THE WITNESS: Oh. I'm sorry.

24 MS. SHEELY: Sorry.

25 THE COURT: I'm so sorry.

1 MS. SHEELY: That Mr. Ebenhack is an
2 intervener in this proceeding.

3 Is that correct?

4 THE WITNESS: Yes. I guess. Yeah.

5 MS. SHEELY: Thank you. That's all.

6 THE COURT: Thank you.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What was the
8 question?

9 THE WITNESS: What do you mean by
10 "intervener," actually?

11 MS. SHEELY: Did you file a petition to
12 intervene --

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Your dad is.

14 MS. SHEELY: -- as a party in the
15 proceeding?

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But he's not
17 testifying.

18 You're not testifying.

19 THE WITNESS: I'm not testifying.

20 MS. SHEELY: I just asked the question
21 if you're an intervener in the proceeding.

22 THE COURT: Thank you.

23 I think the record will reflect who has
24 intervened in the proceeding, and we can move on.

25 THE WITNESS: All right.

1 THE COURT: Thank you. Thank you very
2 much.

3 Next, we have Tom Spring, followed by
4 Chris Weaver.

5 Good evening, sir. Please raise your
6 right hand.

7 WHEREUPON,

8 TOM SPRING
9 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
10 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
11 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

12 EXAMINATION

13 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

14 Q Please state and spell your name for the
15 record.

16 A Tom Spring, T-O-M, S-P-R-I-N-G.

17 Q Thank you. Could you please provide your
18 address along with the township?

19 A 335 Meadow Lane, Circleville, Ohio.

20 Q And the township, sir?

21 A Township. We're unincorporated.

22 Q Thank you. All right. You may proceed.

23 A Thank you.

24 The staff report of investigation on the
25 site of the farms, May 10, 2022, under public

1 comments, on Page 44, it mentions a letter from the
2 Pickaway County Park District, expressing concerns
3 with potential impacts to waterfowl migration, the
4 historic Ohio Erie Canal, and traffic and wildlife
5 crossings.

6 I wanted to mentioned that the Ohio Erie
7 Canal in Wayne Township -- I had the good fortune of
8 working with other local residents on successfully
9 getting this canal on the National Register of
10 Historic Places. We celebrated the listing on the
11 National Register last year. This is not any ordinary
12 canal remnant. This is a three-mile, approximately,
13 plus or minus, stretch of water canal or canal prism.
14 If you think of Roscoe Village and you think of Canal
15 Fulton that have stretches of canal, Circleville is
16 one of those. We don't -- we have an active park
17 district that is working to improve the park there.
18 There was a toe path trail. It generates tourism and
19 activities there at the park, and I just wanted to
20 mention that this is on the National Register of
21 Historic Places in Wayne Township.

22 Thank you.

23 Q Thank you very much.

24 THE COURT: Any questions?

25 Next, we have Chris Weaver, followed by

1 Wendy Gardner.

2 Good evening, sir. Raise your right
3 hand.

4 WHEREUPON,

5 CHRIS WEAVER

6 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
7 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
8 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

9 EXAMINATION

10 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

11 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
12 for the record.

13 A Chris Weaver, C-H-R-I-S W-E-A-V-E-R.

14 Q And your --

15 A 20749 Justus Road, Williamsport, Ohio 43164.

16 Q Thank you. You beat me to it. And do you
17 work or reside within the project area?

18 A No, ma'am.

19 Q Thank you. Please proceed.

20 A We -- I live in the Chipmunk area where
21 they're putting in 10,000 acres of solar. You say
22 that out loud. It's like, "Wow."

23 I'm a firm believer in property owners being
24 able to do what they want with their property. I
25 really am, until it defaces my property, lowers my

1 property value to 60 percent, destroys my water,
2 destroys my drainage, quite possibly destroys my
3 health. I'm 62 years old. If this goes in in our
4 area, 20 years -- 20 years, we'll have to look back.

5 I didn't know about brownfields, as most of
6 you in here have probably never heard that term.
7 There's 450,000 acres of brownfields in Ohio.
8 Brownfields are contaminated areas. DeWine, Governor
9 DeWine, just signed into effect House Bill 168 and
10 110, set aside \$5 million to develop brownfields.

11 Really throwing myself into this fight, I
12 called San Diego. I -- I called England to talk to
13 EDF. They -- I liked the girl's accent. I tried to
14 keep her on the phone, but she referred me to some --
15 referred me to -- to another member. So I called.

16 We have a volunteer fire department in our
17 area, and I hear a lot of nightmare stories about
18 fires. There was just an article that "come" out
19 on -- on social media about a fire in California that
20 burnt 1,100 acres, and they couldn't put it out. We
21 have a volunteer fire department.

22 Most people hear no one talk about
23 batteries. After the solar farm goes in, they clear
24 off a big pad for batteries, and they're not batteries
25 that you think of. They're huge batteries, bigger

1 than a car, hundreds of acres, over 200 acres of
2 batteries.

3 So with all these brownfields, no one talked
4 about developing those. 450,000 acres of solar could
5 go in that instead of our 10,000 acres of prime
6 farmland.

7 So then, you go back to the fire department.
8 One thing I -- the people that I talked to with EDF
9 and the rep that's come to our house offered to pay
10 our taxes to appease us. I talked to them about -- if
11 you want to get everybody on your side, why don't you
12 build us a new fire department? I'm sure a farmer
13 there at the edge of Williamsport would donate an acre
14 of land. Could be a pole barn type fire department,
15 four or five stalls. Maybe buy a couple fire engines.
16 It's a billion-dollar project. What if you three \$3.5
17 million at it, a couple million dollars? No. You
18 couldn't do that. No. How about get four full-time
19 firefighters, pay them for five, eight years 'til we
20 get a levy? Local community would pay for that.
21 Couldn't do that. No. You're talking -- that's
22 ridiculous. They're talking about generating \$100
23 million of money a year.

24 And if you really break it down, I've heard
25 a lot of people here talk about the money that goes to

1 the school, and the money goes here and there. If you
2 break it down, the money that they're going to give to
3 the local schools and -- and the townships and the
4 county, it's really kind of chump change when it --
5 when it comes all to it. It's really nothing. It's
6 probably less than five percent of the money that
7 they're going to generate.

8 Then, if you go and Google what happened to
9 all the solar companies that took the money back
10 during the Obama administration, there's hundreds and
11 hundreds and hundreds of solar companies that went
12 bankrupt. It's not about energy. It's about money.
13 It's about what -- and that's the reason it's a --
14 it's a sprint right now and not a marathon because the
15 administration that's in there now is offering up all
16 these subsidies and all this money. And they're
17 wanting to get the money before it runs out because
18 everyone knows that the next administration that gets
19 in there "are" going to go so far right on fossil
20 fuels. Then, what happens? Then, what happens to all
21 these solar farms?

22 I'm done. Thank you.

23 Q Thank you very much.

24 THE COURT: Questions?

25 Thank you.

1 Next, we have Wendy Gardner, followed
2 by Tim Hartsock. I apologize.

3 Welcome, Ms. Gardner. Please raise
4 your right hand.
5 WHEREUPON,

6 WENDY GARDNER
7 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
8 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
9 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

10 EXAMINATION

11 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

12 Q Thank you. And if you could stand a little
13 closer to the microphone, you may be able to adjust
14 it, too. Could you state and spell your name for the
15 record?

16 A Wendy Gardner, G-A-R-D-N-E-R.

17 Q Thank you. And could you please provide
18 your address along with the township?

19 A 7947 Madison Walnut Road, Ashville.

20 Q Thank you. And the township, ma'am?

21 A Walnut East.

22 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
23 the project area?

24 A [No audible response.]

25 Q Could you say it out loud?

1 A No.

2 Q Thank you. You may proceed.

3 A Okay. My -- I'm here because there's a lot
4 of speculation and questioning about the hazards and
5 wellbeing of the solar projects in general, so the
6 following --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can she speak
8 up, please?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Hold the
10 microphone down. Pull it down. There you go.

11 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

12 Q And I -- yeah. I will just note, as long as
13 our court reporter can hear you, she's the most
14 important person that needs to hear your testimony
15 this evening.

16 A Okay.

17 Q So please proceed.

18 A All right. I'm here, like I said, because
19 there's a lot of questioning and speculation about the
20 hazards like the solar projects, and a lot of the
21 hazards are as follows that are in speculation or --
22 or question.

23 Solar farms tend to have a deep
24 environmental impact from land "degration" to habitat
25 destruction and ecological wind balance. Risk of a --

1 all is not -- the risk admissions -- what -- we all
2 know that solar energy is one of the cleanest sources
3 of energy. It begins, but to begin with, the
4 importance of a solar panel production process, it all
5 begins with the mining and processing of the raw
6 material.

7 THE REPORTER: Excuse me. I am going
8 to need you to stay closer to the mic.

9 THE WITNESS: Quartz, silver.
10 Is that better?

11 Quartz, silver, copper, and aluminum
12 are involved in the mining process. Quartz then
13 undergoes further processing with hazardous chemicals
14 and high-temperature furnaces to produce electronic-
15 grade silicone.

16 The major point of concern in the
17 production process of silicone is the leftover silver
18 content, which is considered a potential environmental
19 hazard. The largescale production of silver modules
20 could amount to the depletion of silver resources.

21 The risk of silver waste disposal is
22 another concern. Not much has been done on this
23 front. The disposal of the chemicals involved in the
24 production depends on the manufacturer, raising
25 serious questions about the environmental safety.

1 While there are responsible solar manufacturers that
2 choose to safely dispose of solar waste, there are
3 others that aren't too concerned about environmental
4 safety and don't hesitate to cut corners to save
5 money. Such irresponsible acts by solar manufacturers
6 can cause more environmental harm than good.

7 Another concern is negative effects of
8 solar energy consumption. The production of solar
9 modules consumes a high amount of energy.

10 Additionally, the resultant water and hazardous
11 byproducts are released into the environment during
12 the manufacturing process. The initial stages of the
13 solar panel manufacturing process consume more energy
14 compared to any other form of electricity production.
15 The manufacturing process involves the transformation
16 of raw material to usable... The different components
17 involved in the process of mining, production, and
18 cleaning of raw material may come from different
19 facilities, unlike conventional sources of energy
20 production, where everything takes place at a single
21 spot. Besides, during the manufacturing process, the
22 heating of quartz requires a lot of upfront energy.
23 This can quickly amount to energy loss.

24 Another concern is water wastage. Like
25 other conventional energy generation plants, some

1 silver plants may require large amounts of water for
2 cooling turbines and cleaning silver collectors.
3 Increase in water demand could strain the available
4 water resources. This may amount to the loss of large
5 volumes of groundwater in arid locations, which may
6 further impact the local wildlife that depends on
7 these water resources. Besides, the use of chemicals
8 such as dust suppressants and dielectric fluids may
9 cause surface contamination or degradation of
10 groundwater.

11 Then, the last one is the habitat
12 degradation. The installation of solar panel farms
13 requires cleaning vast tracts of land, which could
14 affect existing land uses, including agriculture,
15 grazing, mineral production. Cleaning and grading of
16 the land may amount to habitat destruction and pose a
17 risk of soil erosion and compaction. This may further
18 interfere with the existing use of land and
19 alterations of drainage canal channels.

20 Unfortunately, habitat destruction for the wildlife
21 could result in a largescale displacement of wild
22 species. There "has" been reports of numerous bird
23 deaths in California's whatever solar-generated
24 system. Reports blame the deaths on the silver farms'
25 mirrors, claiming that the heat reflects from them,

1 burned off the birds' wings. The -- the impact on
2 wildlife species can destroy the entire ecosystem
3 since one species is dependent on another. When one
4 is removed, the entire ecosystem of that species,
5 comprised of plants, animals, birds, and marine life,
6 can starve to death. The reason is that the habitat
7 becomes less livable for the species that are
8 dependent on each other for survival. The
9 conservation of wildlife habitat and diversity is a
10 major cause for concern of environmentalists.

11 Now, I'm -- I'm saying that these are
12 concerns.

13 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

14 Q Oh. I'm sorry. Is this just your
15 concluding thought, Ms. Gardner?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Okay. Please proceed.

18 A These are the concerns that people are
19 speculating, questioning, what have you, and I'm just
20 saying that for the future of our children and the
21 future of our farmland to grow food for the people in
22 this state and where have you, to me, it's not worth
23 it to jeopardize the health of our future children and
24 grandchildren and the wellbeing of our farmlands. If
25 you question it, don't do it.

1 Q Thank you very much.

2 THE COURT: Do you have a question, Ms.
3 Sheely?

4 Oh, Ms. Gardner?

5 THE WITNESS: Yes?

6 THE COURT: I'm so sorry. We do have a
7 question if you could come back to the microphone.

8 MS. SHEELY: I just wanted to ask,
9 please, the name of the publication that you --

10 THE WITNESS: It's actually a very
11 pro-solar --

12 MS. SHEELY: Oh.

13 THE WITNESS: Yep.

14 MS. SHEELY: Okay.

15 THE WITNESS: They're pro-solar, but
16 they -- a little honesty there.

17 THE COURT: Ms. Gardner, if you could
18 say the publication name into the microphone, that
19 would be very helpful. Thank you so much.

20 THE WITNESS: It's LeadWatch.com.

21 THE COURT: Thank you.

22 Mr. Chamberlain, did you have any
23 questions?

24 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No. Thank you.

25 THE COURT: Thank you.

1 Next, I have Tim Hartsock, followed by
2 Kimberly Matteo.

3 Mr. Hartsock, please raise your right
4 hand.

5 WHEREUPON,

6 TIMOTHY HARTSOCK
7 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
8 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
9 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

10 EXAMINATION

11 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

12 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
13 for the record.

14 A Timothy Hartsock, T-I-M-O-T-H-Y
15 H-A-R-T-S-O-C-K.

16 Q And if you could provide your address along
17 with the township.

18 A My farm office address is 24668 State Route
19 104, Circleville, Ohio, Wayne Township. My home
20 address is 8 Harvestwood Drive, Chillicothe, Ohio.
21 That would be Springfield Township.

22 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
23 the project area?

24 A I am near the area. I'm not sure exactly
25 where the project area is. I only know roughly where

1 it is.

2 Q Fair enough. You may --

3 A I farm in that area.

4 Q You may proceed.

5 A I farm with my brother, Tom, in Pickaway
6 County, and we are strong supporters of personal
7 property rights. I strongly believe in personal
8 property rights.

9 But the point I want to make this evening is
10 I'm -- I'm concerned that those property rights are
11 being eroded. The reason we have this meeting
12 tonight, the reason we have the concern about the
13 solar panels is that the federal government's central
14 planners, not local people, central planners of the
15 federal government are throwing money at these solar
16 projects. That's the federal government's central
17 planners, and in the process, they gain some control
18 over the land. Over time, our rights are slowly but
19 surely being -- being eroded. I have concern about
20 that. I have concern about central planners dictating
21 what's going on in -- in Pickaway County by throwing
22 federal dollars -- those would be our tax dollars at
23 this -- these solar projects.

24 That's it.

25 Q Thank you very much, sir.

1 THE COURT: Any questions? Questions?
2 Next, I have Kimberly Matteo, followed
3 by Margaret Hamman.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can we pass over
5 Kimberly? She'll be right back.

6 THE COURT: Oh. Sure.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She just went to
8 the restroom.

9 THE COURT: Margaret Hamman, then,
10 followed by Patricia Hamilton. Okay.

11 Welcome.

12 MS. HAMILTON: Hi. Patrician Hamilton.

13 THE COURT: Thank you. Please raise
14 your right hand.

15 WHEREUPON,

16 PATRICIA HAMILTON
17 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
18 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
19 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

20 EXAMINATION

21 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

22 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your
23 name.

24 A Patricia Hamilton, P-A-T-R-I-C-I-A,
25 Hamilton, H-A-M-I-L-T-O-N.

1 The reason why I have come --

2 And my address is 22798 Morris Leist Road,
3 Stoutsville, Ohio.

4 I'm on the other side of the county, but I'm
5 a dairy farmer's daughter. So I understand farming,
6 and I understand how important farming is.

7 The first thing I heard was that they were
8 going to strip the topsoil off the, you know, land
9 when they're going to do the solar projects, so the
10 first thing I thought was, "Well, how are you going to
11 regrow any kind of crops?" There's not going to be
12 any crops, and I know this has probably been discussed
13 tonight.

14 But the big thing that kind of came to my
15 mind -- I thought about a historical perspective, and
16 I'm thinking about the Dust Bowl back in the 20s, 30s
17 timeframe. And if you think about it, what happened
18 in the Dust Bowl? All of the topsoil left. They had
19 a very difficult time.

20 Being in the military, I've seen firsthand
21 in Afghanistan and Iraq how these people try to farm
22 land that constantly had dust coming up. You can't do
23 much with that. I don't want Ohio or Pickaway County
24 to turn into, if you will, a dust bowl because solar
25 thinks that it's going to be great.

1 And then, I did a little bit more research,
2 and I looked at how many days of sunshine are in the
3 state of Ohio. Now, clear, sunny days, so we can get
4 the best, optimal solar, which -- everybody thinks
5 that they're going to get paid big bucks. Well, if
6 you don't have enough sunshine, how are you going to
7 get all of that solar? Well, according to national
8 statistics, there are 72 days of clear days of
9 sunshine in Ohio. Now, they did say that with partly
10 cloudy days, you could get up to 180, but that's not
11 very many.

12 I lived in Texas, El Paso, Texas. You could
13 go make a solar project in the middle of the desert.
14 That would be perfect. El Paso, Texas would be great.
15 Actually, that would fabulous. Maybe, we could make a
16 wall with it, and then, we would have 230 days of
17 sunshine in Texas, you know. Two hundred thirty days
18 out in the desert works. Texas would be great, but
19 Ohio, not good at all.

20 I totally oppose this project absolutely,
21 and I feel that if we are really going to do something
22 for our community, instead of putting solar here, we
23 have to remember that it is -- humans are first.

24 We look at solar projects. I read projects
25 that were talking out all of the environmental things,

1 how we're going to kill birds, how we're going to kill
2 all of these different things, and we're going to lose
3 all of that. What about the people? What about human
4 beings? Don't we rise to the importance of having
5 life in general? I mean, here are all these farmers.
6 They are here, putting blood, sweat, and dreams, all
7 throwing away because somebody wants to make a profit.

8 The mighty dollar is not what we need. We
9 need health, family. Several people alluded to God
10 and country. I'm a military member. I know how
11 important it is, and that is so important.

12 So please do not allow the solar project at
13 all in Pickaway County and, in my opinion, ever in
14 Ohio because we don't even have enough sunshine to
15 even make it profitable, so it doesn't even make sense
16 to me.

17 Thank you.

18 Q Thank you very much.

19 THE COURT: Any questions?

20 MS. SHEELY: No. Thanks.

21 MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No.

22 THE COURT: Ms. Matteo?

23 And I'm not sure if we had Margaret
24 Hamman still here.

25 MS. MATTEO: Hello. It's Kimberly

1 Matteo.

2 THE COURT: So sorry. Could you please
3 raise your right hand?

4 MS. MATTEO: I can.

5 WHEREUPON,

6 KIMBERLY MATTEO

7 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
8 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
9 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

10 EXAMINATION

11 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

12 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
13 for the record.

14 A It's Kimberly Matteo, M-A-T-T-E-O.

15 Q Thank you. Please provide your address with
16 the township.

17 A It's 20147 Hill Road, Circleville, and
18 that's Jackson Township.

19 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
20 the project area?

21 A Not this project. No. But another one. I
22 am an adjacent member.

23 Q Thank you. Please proceed.

24 A My husband and I, we're not lucky enough
25 like many of you in this room to be born and raised in

1 beautiful Pickaway County. However, for the last ten
2 years, we have been proud to say we are residents and
3 homeowners in Pickaway County. We had a dream, an
4 escape plan if you will. Our mission was simple.
5 Leave the city. Find a place of peace, tranquility,
6 beauty, and community. We found this and so much more
7 in Pickaway County.

8 We came from the city, which lacked the
9 beautiful country view that we now have. We sighed
10 with relief to see the stretching land without
11 obstructions of manmade products. The city was under
12 a constant state of construction, poor road
13 conditions. The city was full of theft and violence,
14 many from the workers. It was a blessing to drive
15 down a road in great condition and with a lack of fear
16 from all the unknown workers around us.

17 The city was full of grocery stores. We
18 didn't see where our food was growing and where it was
19 raised. In Pickaway County, we are able to see this
20 all around us with this prime farmland.

21 In the city, wildlife was not abundant. In
22 your backyard, you may see a stray dog, but in
23 Pickaway County, we're lucky enough to see all the
24 deer, the birds, the bald eagles out our back window.

25 The city was riddled with corruption and

1 greed and lacked the sense of community, but in
2 Pickaway County, we found what was lacking, true, good
3 neighbors, not agreements.

4 And now, solar companies are threatening to
5 take away my happy ending. They are doing exactly
6 what we strive to escape when we left the city. If
7 Pickaway County is plastered with solar, it will no
8 longer be a dream or a destination of any family. No
9 one will want to find their happy ending and the
10 wasteland that will be Pickaway County if these
11 projects are approved. In fact, myself and many
12 others will make a new escape plan. We will find a
13 new place to call home, one free of solar.

14 I ask that you deny this project and all the
15 others in Pickaway County.

16 Q Thank you very much.

17 A Yes, ma'am.

18 THE COURT: Question?

19 Margaret Hamman and then followed by
20 Steve Garner.

21 Welcome.

22 MS. HAMMAN: Welcome. Thank you.

23 THE COURT: Please raise your right
24 hand.

25 //

1 WHEREUPON,

2 MARGARET HAMMAN

3 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
4 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
5 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

6 EXAMINATION

7 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

8 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
9 for the record.

10 A My name is Margaret Hamman, M-A-R-G-A-R-E-T
11 H-A-M-M-A-N.

12 Q Thank you very much. And your address along
13 with the township.

14 A Sure. 26898 Westfall Road, Circleville,
15 Ohio, and I'm in Wayne Township.

16 Q Thank you very much. And do you work or
17 reside within the project area?

18 A I basically -- it's my front yard, so it
19 is -- it's right close to me.

20 Q Thank you.

21 A So I am fervently against -- against this
22 project. I've lost all my...

23 Just going to speak from my heart. I'm a
24 third-grade teacher. I teach with nonrenewable
25 resources in my third-grade classroom, and I feel like

1 there is a place for solar energy but not for them
2 from taking away another resource of our country,
3 which is farmland. It is our family's livelihood.

4 I don't want to wake up in the morning and
5 see solar panels in my front yard. I -- I'd rather
6 see the crops, the beautiful crops and what they're
7 doing and where they go to feed the world.

8 I think about the generations to come. I'm
9 not going to be alive probably when these are gone,
10 but my children and grandchildren are going to have to
11 deal with the aftermath of this. I watched the
12 Yellowbud Project. I went to many meetings of this
13 here, and they're always saying that it's not going to
14 be the same. I watched the topsoil being torn away,
15 gravel being brought in, soil being compacted. My
16 grandchildren, great-grandchildren will never be able
17 to farm land again. I just -- I'm so against it.

18 I just -- I see the water flowing
19 everywhere. They are not going to have no government
20 and no one to answer to them. I see water going in
21 all different directions, waterflows going different
22 directions. It's just a mess, and I don't want it in
23 my community.

24 I don't want it for my children or my
25 grandchildren, and I think that's what most of us are

1 here for. It's not just for us. It's for the future.

2 Thank you.

3 Q Thank you very much.

4 THE COURT: Questions?

5 Next, Mr. Steve Garner.

6 MR. GARNER: Hi.

7 THE COURT: Welcome.

8 MR. GARNER: My name's -- oh.

9 THE COURT: Oh. Raise your right hand.

10 There you go.

11 WHEREUPON,

12 STEVEN GARNER

13 called as a witness, and having been first duly sworn
14 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
15 the truth, was examined and testified as follows:

16 EXAMINATION

17 BY JUDGE ADDISON:

18 Q Thank you. Please state and spell your name
19 for the record.

20 A Steve -- Steven Garner. It's S-T-E-V-E-N
21 G-A-R-N-E-R.

22 Q Thank you. And could you please provide
23 your address along with the township?

24 A 19428 Hill Road, Circleville, Ohio, Jackson
25 Township.

1 Q Thank you. And do you work or reside within
2 the project area?

3 A I don't.

4 Q Okay. Please proceed.

5 A You know, I've listened to everybody that's
6 anti-solar here tonight. They've all made excellent
7 points, so I'm not going to rehash it because I agree
8 with every one of them. And I, a lot of them, I...

9 But what I didn't hear is -- I think there
10 should be a moratorium on the solar panels based on
11 something, like, clearly different, and that is, every
12 time I've gone to these solar meetings with solar
13 companies, none of them will state where they're
14 getting their solar panels. My understanding is most
15 of them come out of southeast Asia. If that's the
16 case, I'd like a moratorium on it 'til we're
17 guaranteed from the solar companies that they're not
18 utilizing slave labor from China. I don't think we
19 should be using any panels at all that are coming out
20 of that kind of usage. I don't want to be a purveyor
21 of slave labor. A lot of the chemicals that are put
22 into the solar panels -- and there, again, we don't
23 know which ones they're using right now, so we can't
24 go back and study them. They're using child labor out
25 of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And like I

1 said, I don't think anybody in this room would want to
2 be a purveyor of child labor or slavery.

3 That's about all I have to say.

4 Q Thank you very much, Mr. Garner.

5 A Okay.

6 THE COURT: Any questions?

7 That does conclude the witnesses who
8 signed up to testify this evening. I would like to
9 open the floor for any other individuals who would
10 like to say something on the record before we adjourn.
11 Okay. Seeing none.

12 Thank you to everyone for their
13 participation this evening. We would also like to
14 thank Circleville High School for allowing us to use
15 their facilities in order to conduct this public
16 hearing in person with you this evening.

17 Chair French, do you have any
18 additional thoughts before we conclude?

19 MS. FRENCH: Sure. Just a few. Thank
20 you.

21 First, I just want to thank everyone
22 for welcoming us into your beautiful community. It's
23 very nice to be here tonight. I want to thank
24 everybody who came here tonight, everyone that spoke.
25 Thank you very much. We very much value you, your

1 input. It's a brilliant, important part of this
2 process, so thank you very much for being here.

3 THE COURT: Thank you very much.

4 THE REPORTER: We are going to go off
5 the record at 7:55 p.m.

6 THE COURT: One second. And I just
7 wanted to open up the floor for Commissioner Wippel or
8 Mr. Mullins if you have any additional thoughts you'd
9 like to say at this time.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm good.

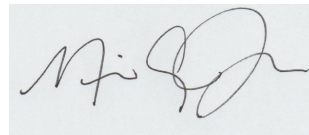
11 THE COURT: Okay. Okay. Okay. The
12 hearing has now concluded, and the hearing transcript
13 will be submitted on the record for the Board's
14 consideration in this case.

15 Thank you all again, and have a very
16 wonderful evening.

17 (Whereupon, at 7:56 p.m., the
18 proceeding was concluded.)
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25

CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSITION OFFICER

I, NIC JOSEPH, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify that any witness(es) in the foregoing proceedings, prior to testifying, were duly sworn; that the proceedings were recorded by me and thereafter reduced to typewriting by a qualified transcriptionist; that said digital audio recording of said proceedings are a true and accurate record to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.



NIC JOSEPH

Notary Public in and for the
State of Ohio

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I, DIANA SWANSON, do hereby certify that this transcript was prepared from the digital audio recording of the foregoing proceeding, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Diana R Swanson

DIANA SWANSON

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Lydia Rhoads on behalf of Veritext Legal Solutions