

**BEFORE  
THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD**

In the Matter of the Application of Oak Run	)	
Solar Project, LLC for a Certificate of	)	Case No. 22-0549-EL-BGN
Environmental Compatibility and Public Need	)	

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**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF TRENT PARKER**

**ON BEHALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL  
WORKERS, LOCAL UNION 683**

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Dated: May 10, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Trent Dougherty

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Electrical Workers, Local Union 683  
(Counsel willing to accept service by email)*

1 Q: PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BUSINESS ADDRESS.

2 A: My name is Trent Parker. My business address is 947 Goodale Blvd. Columbus, Ohio  
3 43212.

4  
5 Q: WHAT PARTY ARE YOU TESTIFYING ON BEHALF OF?

6 A: The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union 683, known as IBEW  
7 Local 683 or Local 683.

8  
9 Q: WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AT LOCAL 683?

10 A: I am a Local 683 member and the Director of the Electrical Trades Center of Central Ohio,  
11 also known as the ETC.

12  
13 Q: WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL 683 AND THE ETC?

14 A: The ETC is the state-of-the-art training hub and apprenticeship program for central Ohio  
15 IBEW members.

16  
17 Q: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AN IBEW MEMBER?

18 A: Since 2000 when I began as an apprentice.

19  
20 Q: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AFFILIATED WITH THE ETC?

21 A: I trained at the ETC as both an apprentice and journeyman. I began teaching for the ETC  
22 in 2005, then became the Instruction Coordinator in 2010. I was in that role until 2022, and was  
23 recently promoted to Director of the ETC in 2022. I'm presently in that role.

1 Q: WHAT IS THE ETC'S MISSION?

2 A: The ETC is committed to training the next generation of central Ohio IBEW member  
3 electricians and electrical workers. We have an earn-while-you-learn apprenticeship model, which  
4 allows men and women in Ohio to learn the electrical trades while earning a livable wage with  
5 excellent health insurance and retirement benefits. Completion of this program leads to a fulfilling  
6 and important career as a journeyman, which supports the individual's middle-class life and  
7 underpins Ohio's future prosperity.

8  
9 Q: HOW IS THE ETC FUNDED?

10 A: We are nearly 100% self-funded. On occasion, we are awarded government grants  
11 primarily for pre-apprenticeship activities.

12  
13 Q: WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS DIRECTOR?

14 A: I work for a Board of Trustees and via their direction make the day-to-day financial and  
15 programming decisions that ensure IBEW members have the skills they need to thrive as our field  
16 faces new challenges and opportunities.

17  
18 Q: WHAT KIND OF PROGRAMMING DOES THE ETC OFFER?

19 A: We offer foundational courses for apprentices and supplemental courses for journeymen.  
20 Apprentices receive on-the-job training, working side-by-side with a journeyman for one of our  
21 signatory contractors. The apprentice earns a percentage of the journey-level wage and benefits as  
22 they follow the five year path to becoming a journeyman. They attend evening classes twice a

1 week at the ETC during the fall and spring semesters. Journeymen also have the opportunity to  
2 enroll in classes of their choice to maintain and build the relevant skills they need to be successful.

3  
4 Q: DO THE COURSES STAY THE SAME YEAR TO YEAR?

5 A: No. As the Director, it's my job to ensure that our courses keep up with technological  
6 changes. I aim to have apprentices and journeymen entering the workforce with skills that  
7 businesses in Ohio look for to grow and remain competitive. So we constantly update our courses  
8 to keep pace with new technologies and methods.

9  
10 Q: HOW MANY PEOPLE ATTEND THESE COURSES?

11 A: Currently, we have about 500 apprentices at different stages on their five year paths to  
12 becoming journeymen. But we expect the total number of apprentices to reach approximately  
13 1,000 apprentices total within 4 years.

14  
15 Q: WHAT IS YOUR BASIS FOR THAT EXPECTATION?

16 A: Our first-year class sizes have been growing every year for the past 4-5 years. Before 2019,  
17 we would usually have between 45 and 80 members in our first-year classes. Around 2020 that  
18 number started to grow every year. In 2020 we had 100 first-years, in 2021 we had 120, and in  
19 2022 we had 170. Based on those trends, by 2025 we expect to be up to 250 first-years on an  
20 annual basis.

21  
22 Q: WHAT IS SPURRING THE GROWTH IN CLASS SIZE AT THE ETC?

1 A: In large part, it is the growth of renewable energy in Ohio. The basic skills that apprentices  
2 acquire at the ETC, including installing conduit systems, grounding, electrical code, and AC/DC  
3 systems, all provide them the foundation to work on a solar project. But we also have both solar-  
4 specific and energy storage-specific trainings. These are elective courses that apprentices and  
5 journeymen can take to refine their skills and make them more attractive on the job market.

6  
7 Q: IS THIS TRUE IN MADISON COUNTY SPECIFICALLY?

8 A: Yes. There are already two solar projects in Madison County that were approved in 2021  
9 which IBEW members are working on: the Madison Fields Project and Fox Squirrel Project. After  
10 these were approved in 2021, we saw a 50-person increase in the size of our first-year class from  
11 2021 to 2022.

12  
13 Q: ARE YOU AWARE OF THE PROPOSED OAK RUN SOLAR PROJECT IN MADISON  
14 COUNTY?

15 A: Yes, I am.

16  
17 Q: AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE ELECTRICAL TRADES CENTER, WHAT IS YOUR  
18 OPINION OF THE OAK RUN SOLAR PROJECT?

19 A: I am strongly in favor of the Oak Run project. The project would provide hundreds of good-  
20 paying middle-class jobs to IBEW members who are prepared and eager to work on them. Putting  
21 a photovoltaic (also known as PV) or energy storage job like this on your resume means you are  
22 far more likely to be hired for future PV or energy storage jobs. These projects are becoming

1 increasingly common in Ohio, so working on Oak Run will prepare our members to build these  
2 future projects.

3  
4 Q: WHAT BENEFITS WOULD THAT TRAINING HAVE FOR THE REST OF OHIO, IF  
5 ANY?

6 A: A workforce that has experience with these systems will attract more PV and battery  
7 storage investment to Ohio, ensuring that the state stays on the cutting edge. All kinds of Ohio  
8 institutions are investing in PV and battery storage projects, including hospitals, government  
9 administrative buildings, businesses, and utilities. If there is no workforce with experience  
10 available for these projects, they will draw in labor from out of state. An 800 megawatt solar  
11 project like Oak Run is one of the biggest renewable energy projects that's been built in the state;  
12 this will provide our members with an especially strong opportunity to build experience and make  
13 renewable energy development more efficient and safe on future projects. This project is about  
14 ensuring that Ohio can become a leader in renewable energy projects, which will allow investment  
15 in those projects to benefit the economy of the entire state.

16  
17 Q: WILL THE OAK RUN SOLAR PROJECT PROVIDE ANY UNIQUE BENEFITS TO  
18 OHIO, BEYOND THE ONES YOU JUST MENTIONED?

19 A: Yes. The most unique benefit of the project comes from its battery storage component.  
20 One of the issues with renewable energy in the past has been that the availability of the resource  
21 changes over time: when the sun stops shining solar panels stop generating electricity. But the Oak  
22 Run project will include a 300 megawatt battery storage facility that means the facility will be able  
23 to provide electricity to residents of Madison County and Ohio all the time.

1 Q: WHY IS THE PROJECT'S BATTERY STORAGE COMPONENT OF INTEREST TO  
2 IBEW, IF AT ALL?

3 A: To my knowledge this will only be the second, and certainly the biggest, battery storage  
4 facility for solar power built in Ohio. It will provide Local 683 members with training that they  
5 wouldn't be able to get anywhere else in Ohio, and will make it easier to build reliable, essential  
6 battery storage facilities going forward. Like I said earlier, the better trained our members are, the  
7 easier it will be to attract similar projects to Ohio in the future. For that reason, Oak Run will  
8 provide consistent, good-paying opportunities for our members and allow Ohio to become a leader  
9 in cutting edge, reliable sources of renewable energy.

10  
11 Q: BASED ON THE ABOVE, WILL THIS PROJECT SERVE THE PUBLIC INTEREST,  
12 CONVENIENCE, AND NECESSITY?

13 A: Yes.

14  
15  
16 Q: DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?

17 A: Yes, but I reserve the right to submit supplemental testimony if new information becomes  
18 available.

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that The Ohio Power Siting Board's e-filing system will electronically serve notice of the filing of this document on the parties referenced on the service list of the docket card who have electronically subscribed to the case on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of May 2023.

/s/ Trent Dougherty

Trent Dougherty



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Summary: Testimony DIRECT TESTIMONY OF TRENT PARKER electronically  
filed by Mr. Trent A. Dougherty on behalf of International Brotherhood of Electrical  
Workers (IBEW) Local Union 683.