

CASE 23-0734-EL-BLN

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Dear Members of the Ohio Power Siting Board,

I am writing to express my support for the Richwood Solar Project and to some facts highlighting the numerous benefits it will bring to our community and our state. As a concerned citizen deeply invested in the well-being of our environment and our economy, I believe that embracing renewable energy solutions like solar power is crucial for a sustainable future.

1. Job Creation:

The development and operation of the Richwood Solar Project will create a significant number of jobs in our community. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), the solar industry employs thousands of workers across the United States, with job growth outpacing many other sectors.

These jobs range from construction and installation to maintenance and administration, providing valuable employment opportunities for local residents and stimulating economic growth.

2. Economic Benefits for Farmers:

Solar farms offer farmers an additional source of income by leasing their land for solar development. This supplementary income can help farmers cover expenses such as nursing home care and healthcare, ensuring financial stability and security for agricultural families.

The revenue generated from solar leases can provide farmers with a steady income stream, reducing their reliance on volatile agricultural markets and mitigating financial risks.

3. Environmental Impact:

Contrary to misconceptions, solar farms have minimal negative impacts on wildlife and ecosystems. Studies have shown that well-designed solar installations can coexist harmoniously with local fauna, with no evidence of harm to birds or other wildlife.

Solar energy does not contribute to the formation of tornadoes or exacerbate heat island effects. In fact, solar panels can help mitigate heat by absorbing sunlight and converting it into electricity, thereby reducing the overall temperature of the surrounding area.

4. Safety and Sustainability:

The use of lithium-ion batteries for power storage in conjunction with solar energy systems offers a safe and reliable solution for energy storage. These batteries have undergone rigorous testing and are equipped with advanced safety features to prevent accidents and minimize risks.

Compared to traditional energy sources such as coal and nuclear power, solar energy is cleaner, safer, and more sustainable. Solar power produces no harmful emissions or radioactive waste, making it an environmentally friendly alternative that helps reduce air and water pollution.

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5. Land Use and Decommissioning:

After the end of its operational life, the land used for the Richwood Solar Project can be restored to its original state or repurposed for other beneficial uses, such as agriculture or wildlife habitat restoration. Solar farm decommissioning plans ensure that land is rehabilitated responsibly, leaving it safe and suitable for future generations.

Studies have shown that land used for solar farms can actually become more fertile and productive over time, as the presence of solar panels helps prevent soil erosion, retain moisture, and promote plant growth.

In conclusion, the Richwood Solar Project represents a golden opportunity for our community to embrace clean, renewable energy and reap the numerous benefits it offers. I urge the Ohio Power Siting Board to approve this project without delay, recognizing its potential to create jobs, support our farmers, protect our environment, and secure a brighter future for all.

Thank you for considering my input and for your commitment to responsible energy development.

Sincerely,

Bob Rhodes

Delaware, Ohio