



Representative Bill Reineke  
Icebreaker Wind Turbine Project

August 19, 2020

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Chairman Sam Randazzo  
The Ohio Power Siting Board  
180 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

**Case Number: 16-1871-EL-BGN**

Mr. Chairman:

As members of the Ohio General Assembly, we would like to comment on the decision made by the Power Siting Board as it relates to the Icebreaker wind turbine project. This project would be the first offshore wind facility in the freshwaters of the Great Lakes. This project is being sold as environmentally and economically friendly, but we see this as an environmental and economic gamble with Ohio's most precious natural resource.

LEEDCO stated that the conditions approved by the Power Siting Board are a "poison pill" for the project and are requesting reconsideration. We have serious reservations about this project, and while we do not want this project to move forward in any form, we would urge the Power Siting Board to remain firm in their original ruling and retain ALL conditions in the approval ruling.

Specifically, we have grave environmental concerns about this project:

- According to LEEDCO, each turbine will contain 404 gallons of industrial lubricants in their gearboxes. Wind turbine gearbox seals are known to fail, leaking oil and grease onto the area below. Turbines are also known to catch fire and explode. Do we want those toxins in Lake Erie? We don't think Ohioans do.
- The Army Corps of Engineers had been dumping dredged industrial toxic sediments, such as PCB's, from the Cuyahoga River into Lake Erie for nearly 100 years. Those toxins are currently encapsulated under layers of mud and silt which will be released while building turbine foundations & laying 12-plus miles of transmission cables. *Cleveland's main water intake, the Crib, is located just down-current from this location.* Do we want to risk Ohio's main source of fresh drinking water? We don't think Ohioans do.

- The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service recommends siting wind turbines at least 3 miles away from the open waters of the Great Lakes, because of confluence of migration routes over the Great Lakes, including Lake Erie. There have also been recommendations that this project warrants a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). One has not been undertaken. We believe that Ohioans are owed a full picture of the impact of this project before it moves forward. In fact, we believe that if there are *any* changes to the approval by the OPSB, there should be a stipulation added requiring that an EIS be conducted.

We have economic concerns about this project:

- Icebreaker and LEEDCo have touted this project as a job creator. However, the facts show that very few permanent jobs have ever been created by these types of projects.
- Higher electric costs from wind power have actually resulted in manufacturing *job losses* in parts of North America, specifically nearly 300,000 lost jobs in Ontario which barred further turbine construction on land and never allowed turbines in Canada's portion of the Great Lakes.
- The facts show, according to LEEDCo's own consultant's study (document DOE/EA-2045) that the Icebreaker project *could* generate 159 temporary onsite construction jobs for local workers. An additional 187 specialized temporary construction jobs *could* be created for "highly specialized workers who would come from outside of the area and would remain only for the duration of the construction." The report is vague about how it would create the additional 150 jobs to reach their bizarre claim of 500 jobs. It's an outlandish claim, to help the developer secure the regulatory approvals and government funding needed to move forward with their plans.
- Indeed, that same report states that Icebreaker could create 9 permanent jobs. That is a more realistic estimate based on the number of actual permanent jobs created by a Block Island offshore wind facility in Rhode Island, the only such facility in the U.S. today.

We understand and respect that all jobs are important, but we do not think Lake Erie should be put at irreparable risk for a handful of permanent jobs when the economic losses associated with an unhealthy Lake are far greater than these hypothetical gains.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your consideration of this perspective. We respectfully request that you remain firm in your conditions for approving the development of these turbines in our precious Lake Erie.



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