



(<https://michigantownships.org>).

MTA Press Release On House-Passage Of Renewable Energy Siting Bills

House-passed renewable energy siting bills do not protect local control

Battle on behalf of true local voices over siting and permitting process shifts to state Senate.



A coalition of organizations representing local governments, land use planning and the agriculture community continues to oppose the fast-moving legislative efforts overhauling siting and permitting for utility-scale renewable energy facilities. The heavily amended legislation, which passed the House on party lines following a marathon, late-night session on Thursday, creates a one-size-fits-all approach for Michigan's communities and mandates that local governments follow state requirements to retain a local say for these facilities.

The Michigan Townships Association (MTA), Michigan Association of Counties (MAC), Michigan Association of Planning (MAP), Michigan Farm Bureau and Michigan Agri-Business Association remain opposed to the legislation and will continue the fight to retain local authority as the legislation moves to the Senate.

House Bills 5120 and 5121 nullify all current local renewable energy zoning ordinances—which municipalities throughout the state have carefully crafted with resident input, based on community wishes—and replace them with mandated state requirements. If a local unit of government adopts these requirements or less restrictive versions, renewable facilities would be required to apply with the local government—however, with a short, four-month timeline to act on the application, with an option for extension if mutually agreed upon.

"Despite the amendments, this legislation continues to disregard the local efforts of townships and their residents who have already created ordinances allowing the placement of renewable energy facilities on tens of thousands of acres around the state," said Neil Sheridan, MTA executive director. "We thank those representatives who voted to oppose this inequitable legislative attack on local authority that unduly forces these facilities into Michigan's rural communities, rather than seeking an equitable, balanced statewide approach to clean energy."



"Michigan Association of Counties opposes this legislation as it ignores the unique geographic needs of the counties and doesn't allow for local variances to site plans," said Steve Currie, MAC executive director. "Local officials are elected to make these decisions for their communities and these bills strip them of that authority."

Coalition members urge the Senate to slow down the rushed legislative process and better engage with impacted stakeholders.

"The Michigan Association of Planning is extremely disappointed that alternative energy siting bills were developed without adequate input from an appropriate variety of stakeholders," said Andrea Brown, AICP, MAP executive director. "As written, and if passed by the Senate, the bills will have negative consequences, most particularly on Michigan's rural communities. The Senate should pause the rapid advancement of the bills and convene stakeholders in a transparent approach that could fix bill deficiencies. It's better to take time now and create siting solutions that meet the needs of local government, the industry and Michigan's residents."

Even with last minute-amendments offered to generate needed votes for passage in the House, Michigan Farm Bureau Legislative Counsel Andrew Vermeesch warns the legislation will tie the hands of local townships, as well as create an alternative pathway for the Michigan Public Service Commission to expedite the permitting process of large-scale energy projects.

"Similar to the diversity of Michigan agriculture, each community is equally diverse," said Vermeesch, noting that more than 2,000 Farm Bureau members submitted more than 4,000 messages to lawmakers opposing the legislation and expressed their support for keeping local zoning decisions in the hands of locally elected officials. "This package fails miserably in striking a balance between renewable energy, land use, private property rights and farmland preservation."

Said Chuck Lippstreu, Michigan Agri-Business Association president, "This legislation will effectively silence small-town voices on an issue with major implications for the future of rural Michigan, and the last-minute amendments to these bills do not change that impact. Renewable energy siting needs to be deliberate, thoughtful and inclusive of input from local leaders and community members, and we oppose these bills because they disregard the perspectives of rural, agricultural communities in our state."

MTA Headquarters

512 Westshire Dr. Lansing, MI 48917
Phone: 517.321.6467 | Fax:
517.321.8908

MTA Mailing Address

P.O. Box 80078, Lansing, MI 48908-
0078



CAL 112

HB 5120

RECORD ROLL CALL 483

AYE- 56

NAY- 52

2

***AYASH**

***ALEXANDER**

***ANDREWS**

***ARAGONA**

***ARBIT**

***BEELEER**

***BEGOLE**

***BESON**

***BEZOTTE**

***BIERLEIN**

***BOLLIN**

***BORTON**

***BRABEC**

***BREEN**

***BRIXIE**

***BRUCK**

***BYRNES**

***CARRA**

***CARTER, B.**

***CARTER, T.**

***CAVITT**

***CHURCHES**

***COFFIA**

***COLEMAN**

***CONLIN**

***DEBOER**

***DEBOYER**

***DESANA**

***DIEVENDORF**

***EDWARDS**

***FARHAT**

***FILLER**

***FINK**

***FITZGERALD**

***FOX**

***FRISKE**

***GLANVILLE**

***GRANT**

***GREEN, P.**

***GREENE, J.**

***HAADSMIA**

***HALL**

***HARRIS**

***HILL**

***HOADLEY**

***HOOD**

***HOPE**

***HOSKINS**

***JOHNSEN**

***KOLESZAR**

***KUHN**

***KUNSE**

***LIBERATI**

***LIGHTNER**

***MACDONELL**

***MADDOCK**

***MARKKANEN**

**THIRD READING
PASSAGE**

***MARTIN**

***MARTUS**

***MCFALL**

***MCKINNEY**

***MEERMAN**

***MENTZER**

***MILLER**

***MORGAN**

***MORSE**

***MUELLER**

***NEELEY**

***NEYER**

***O'NEAL**

***OUTMAN**

***PAIZ**

***PAQUETTE**

***POHUTSKY**

***POSTHUMIUS**

***PRESTIN**

***PRICE**

***PURI**

***RHEINGANS**

***RIGAS**

***ROGERS**

***ROTH**

***SCHMALTZ**

***SCHRIVER**

***SCHUETTE**

***SCOTT**

***SHANNON**

***SKAGGS**

***SLAGH**

***SMIT**

***SNYDER**

***ST. GERMAINE**

***STECKLOFF**

***STEELE**

***STONE**

***TATE**

***THOMPSON**

***TISDEL**

***TSERNOGLO**

***VANDERWALL**

***VANWOERKON**

***WEGELA**

***WEISS**

***WENDZEL**

***WHITSETT**

***WILSON**

***WITWER**

***WOZNIAK**

***YOUNG**

***ZORN**

House Bill 5120

**HOUS
BILL**

Vote Color Key

Green= Aye; Red= Nay; White= Absent