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Ohio Power Siting Board Public Hearing  
October 11, 2021

Good evening, my name is Jane Harf and I am the Executive Director of Green Energy Ohio (GEO). Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in support of the Springwater Solar Project in Madison and Franklin Counties currently under development by Apex Clean Energy.

Green Energy Ohio (GEO) is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable energy policies, technologies, and practices through education and outreach. We represent a diverse membership of individuals, businesses, community and government entities, and academic institutions who share GEO's mission. Green Energy Ohio has members and supporters throughout the state, including many in the Central Ohio area.

Apex Clean Energy was one of the first large-scale renewable energy companies to become a member of GEO. In the time since, we have developed an excellent relationship based on our common goal of expanding clean energy in Ohio and our shared commitment to community engagement.

The GEO Statement of Policy Positions endorses investment in utility-scale solar projects for the broad range of economic, environmental, and public health benefits that these facilities provide. First and foremost, local communities are the beneficiaries of these projects, through substantial Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) that support school districts, municipal services, and infrastructure. We have only to look at other manufacturing and commercial sites – far more disruptive to the surrounding area – to see the benefits accrued to residents and local governments. In the case of Springwater Solar, it is estimated that Madison and Franklin counties would receive \$1.4 million annually from the project.

In addition, Apex Clean Energy has gone beyond the financial requirements under law to establish a community grant program supporting groups that work in the areas of health, sustainability, education, and economic opportunity. Building the human infrastructure of a community is as vital as building the physical infrastructure.

GEO places significant value on collaborative education and planning efforts between developers and community members. Apex Clean Energy recognizes that information flows two ways, and they place a premium on listening and learning from community members throughout the process, as well as providing complete, transparent information on the project.

The need for clean affordable renewable energy generated by large-scale solar facilities is constantly increasing, driven by the demands of corporations with aggressive sustainability goals and municipal governments who have committed to reducing their carbon footprint. At a time when we are witnessing severe hurricanes along the coasts, wildfires and droughts in the west, and changing weather patterns that impact agricultural operations here in Ohio, we must take into account the environmental value of adding renewable resources to the energy grid. Ohio is well positioned to take advantage of energy diversification – the first step in the transition from fossil fuels.

Thank you for your time, and I appreciate your consideration of our remarks.