

Testimony on HB 113, Alternative Energy in Schools
Before the House Alternative Energy Committee
Presented by Al Rosenfield on behalf of the
League of Women Voters of Ohio
June 9, 2009

The League of Women Voters strongly advocates the use of alternative energy, and specifically we support "action by appropriate levels of government to encourage the use of renewable resources and energy conservation." Solar energy is a particularly useful form of alternative energy for schools. An on-site solar installation can serve as an educational tool in areas such as physics, meteorology, data entry and analysis, and mathematics. Solar energy is also particularly helpful on hot, still days when school is out. On these days the schools can sell their excess electricity to help satisfy the large demands for air conditioning in the community. Finally, the requirement of HB 113 that the installations be in place by 2012 would lead to exceeding the solar energy targets set in SB 221 from the last session.

However, we are commenting as an interested party because we believe that HB 113 can be improved.

Solar energy might not be the most appropriate choice for many schools because of geography, building design, or economics. In his statement to this committee, Mr. Jay Godfrey of AEP noted that wind and biomass are viable alternatives for that utility to satisfy the requirements of SB 221. We recommend that the HB 113 be amended to allow each school district to choose any form of alternative energy, provided that the total power is the same 50kW as already required for solar alone.

The other concern that we have is that this is unfunded and, as such, should not be mandatory for school systems,

Thank you for your attention. I will be happy to answer questions.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.