
COOKE COUNTY COALITION FOR PROPERTY RIGHTS

August 19, 2019

Dr. Thompson and Members of the Era ISD School Board

Thank you for your public service on behalf of the children and families of our community and for the opportunity to appear before you this evening. I'm quite certain this is not the topic you would prefer to be talking about as the school year begins. You have been placed in this unenviable position because a Portuguese company has proposed to develop a massive, industrial wind-energy project here in the Era School District and is asking you to subsidize their business by using local taxpayer dollars.

My family has owned and leased land here in Cooke County for over thirty years and by choice invested significant resources and moved back here when my service in the Administration of President George W. Bush ended. This is home. We are so deeply rooted here that we sold our house in DC and I commute back and forth weekly between Gainesville and DC. It's a long commute, but worth every air mile.

Who Are We?

But I am here tonight not only on behalf of my family but also the Cooke County Coalition For Property Rights, a group formed within just the last month of more than 47 individuals and families who own more than 30,000 acres. We are residents, landowners, business owners, farmers and ranchers, and concerned citizens who have sought out INDEPENDENT information on industrial-scale wind energy and its potential impact on our community. We have come together with the firm belief that the proposed Wildcat Creek wind generation facility will negatively impact property-values, property taxes, the livability and quality of life of the residents, the marketability of the area, economic growth and our way of life.

We are NOT activists, as a matter of fact I moved here to get away from political battles. This was forced on us by a company outside of Cooke County, indeed, outside the U.S. We are people who live here, work here, farm and ranch here, raise our families here and invest here. We view the proposed industrial-scale wind-energy project as an existential threat to our community, our county, our property values and our way of life. We are all deeply committed to private property rights, and yield to no one in our defense of the same. But corporations, especially foreign companies, nor landowners have the right to ask their neighbors to subsidize their development through tax abatements and then see the profits repatriated back to the parent company in Europe!

Negative Environmental Impacts Will Be Significant

Make no mistake, the Wildcat Creek proposal will dramatically alter development and land-use patterns for decades to come, certainly for the rest of our lives and the lives of our children and grandchildren.

EDP Renewables has said their intent is to construct 53 wind-turbines that will each be at least 500' tall. Proposals in neighboring counties are for turbines 600' tall. Compare this to Muenster where the towers are 250' tall, which is problematic enough. Why more than double the height? This is not a prime area for such a facility due to the fact we are not on a ridge, thus the need to build taller towers.

This is the equivalent to having 53, 50-60 story buildings concentrated in the Era ISD. To put this in perspective, there are only 32 buildings in all of Texas that are 600' tall or taller. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_tallest_buildings_in_Texas) EDP Renewables is proposing to construct 1.65 times as many such massive structures here in Era than buildings of that scale in all of Texas.

Chris Barcroft, Byron & Reneae Berry, Leah Bredelker, Eddie Boggs, Tom & Whaley Bookhout, Harold & Cindy Bowles, George & Cindy Bryant, Cindy Merrick Bryant, Chris & Cindy Carter, Rex Corey, Jr., Criss Crossen, Jay Crossen, George & Weldon Doughty, Eugene Mark Elam, GC & Mary Ellis, Meredith Ellis, Pam & Stanley Enderby, Nancy & John Endres, Robert & Jennifer Fuller, Marsha Giggis, Jared & Leah Groves, Jeremy and Calli Hammonds, Mike & Denise Hammonck, Cullen & Amy Hinshaw, Cap & Marilyn Koozts, Joe Knight, Richard & Dana Lee, Kenny Marchant, Richard Merrick, Steve Merrick, Kathy Meyer, Claudia & Mary Nichols, Jerry Ruchett, Chavon & Kacie Rauschuber, Ty & Kim Richardson, Shari & Lori Rimmer, Paula Roberts, Sonia Romero, David & Karen Sampson, Clint & Jackie Schaffer, Tim & Sherry Sicking, Grant & Karen Simpson, Graham & Cindy Swank, Justin Swank, Casey & Ann Voss, BettJo Weber, Jim Whaley