



March 3, 2023

Jenifer French
Chair
Ohio Power Siting Board
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: Oak Run Solar Generation Facility, OPSB Case No. 22-0549-EL-BGN

Dear Chair French,

On behalf of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, I appreciate the opportunity to share our support for renewable energy development in Madison County, specifically Savion's proposed Oak Run Solar Generation Facility. As the state's leading business advocate and resource, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce aggressively champions free enterprise, economic competitiveness, and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

Oak Run represents a significant private capital investment in excess of \$1,087,000,000 into domestic energy production within Madison County. Locally, this translates into outputs of over \$154 million and earnings of over \$85 million, both during construction and long-term for Madison County. The State of Ohio will also see considerable revenues from the Oak Run project, starting with outputs of over \$429.3 million and earnings of over \$212.3 million, both during construction and long-term.

Additionally, through the Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) program, Oak Run would provide opportunity for the county and region by yielding property taxes a minimum of \$7.2 million annually for all taxing districts. These combined revenues will help shoulder and offset the existing tax burden on local residents and businesses. The PILOT also produces ancillary economic benefits to the community and state. For example, the program requires the solar developer to utilize 80% in-state labor throughout construction and installation of the project. As a result of this requirement, on-site labor modeling estimates project that over 1,487 Madison County jobs and over 3,033 jobs for Ohioans will be generated during the construction period. Long-term operational jobs equate to more than 35 for Madison County and over 63 for the State of Ohio.

We would also like to underscore the relationship of PILOT revenue to school funding. Under Ohio's school funding formula, a school district's capacity can impact how much it receives in state funds. The assessed value of the property within a school district will impact the amount of funding it receives from the state. Because PILOT revenue is set at a fixed amount for the life of the project and does not fluctuate with property values, the over \$4.3 million in annual school district revenues derived from Oak Run will not impact the funding allocated to both the Jonathan Alder and London City School Districts by the state.

We acknowledge and appreciate the sensitivity surrounding both this project and utility-scale solar projects overall in Madison County. Savion has voluntarily put forward numerous project alterations to Oak Run's size and scope. This comes as no surprise to us, as Savion continually demonstrates across Ohio a willingness to work with local communities and act as good neighbors to adjacent property owners.

One of the most compelling dynamics of this project is the inclusion of a 300-megawatt battery storage system. Battery storage allows for putting more power onto the grid during peak times like evenings when panels are not generating power but residential activity increases. Ohio ranks 7th in the number of outages affecting over 50,000 people – largely due to weather – and these outages have cost Ohio businesses over \$600 million from 2016-2020. Accordingly, this degree of battery storage should provide significant grid resiliency, and we applaud Savion's innovation and willingness to invest and place this technology in Ohio.

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce has long advocated for an "all of the above" approach to energy policy that includes new generation derived from renewable sources. The 800 megawatts created by Oak Run's facility will enable businesses and consumers to have greater choices for their energy needs and ensure safe, reliable, and affordable energy sources here in the Buckeye State. In Ohio's constant race against other states and countries to attract business, we must acknowledge the increased demand for renewable energy – especially affordable solar energy – generated within the states where businesses choose to locate. Our state presently has current and prospective employers weighing future investment here and positioned to purchase the energy generated at Oak Run.

Finally, it is worth noting the positive economic ripple effects of embracing a quality development partner in Savion. On February 28, Savion announced an agreement to purchase 2.6 gigawatts of high-performance, Series 7 thin film solar modules from First Solar, Inc. This announcement is significant as First Solar is the only U.S. headquartered company among the world's largest solar manufacturers, and located in Perrysburg, Ohio. First Solar has additionally announced plans to expand its existing Perrysburg operations with a \$270 million research and development innovation center, expected to open in 2024 and to create 200 jobs. With all this combined private investment, Ohio's economy has a clear opportunity to thrive through clean energy generation and technology innovation.

In closing, we appreciate your body's consideration of Savion's Oak Run Solar Generation Facility and encourage all sides to continue having a constructive dialogue about how best to honor Madison County's character and quality of life while also welcoming private investment into our rural economies to drive energy independence. The Ohio Chamber

strongly reiterates its support for the Oak Run Solar Generation Facility and urges the Board to approve its certificate application.

We appreciate your consideration of this information and are happy to provide further detail upon request.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Stivers", written in a cursive style.

Steve Stivers
President & CEO
Ohio Chamber of Commerce

Cc: Gregory Slone, P.E.
Director Mary Mertz
Director Bruce Vanderhoff, M.D.
Director Anne Vogel
Director Lydia Mihalik
Director Brian Baldrige
Representative Sharon Ray
Representative Michael Skindell
Senator Bill Reineke
Senator Kent Smith