

A Call to Action - Protecting Our Legacy

WRITTEN BY
JW Thompson

Sometimes, we feel led to speak or act, even when we don't fully understand why. As I sit down to write this, I feel compelled to share these thoughts for someone specific—though I don't know who you are. Perhaps you're someone grappling with what to do, questioning whether you have the strength, or wondering if your efforts will even matter. If that resonates, then this is for you...

The quiet rhythm of rural life is something to be cherished. The rolling fields, the hum of tractors, the scent of freshly cultivated hay and the deep connection to the land that sustains us are gifts and knowledge handed down through generations. Yet, these landscapes we call home are increasingly targeted for industrial renewable energy facilities, and with them come potential risks we cannot afford to ignore.

This isn't just about opposing change—it's about ensuring that any changes honor the values and well-being of our communities. The first step is education: researching the potential impacts of these facilities and weighing the risks against the rewards. If your conscience leads you to believe the risks outweigh the benefits, it's time to take a stand. And yes, taking a stand can mean different things for different people.

Opposition can be as simple as signing a petition or writing a letter to the government agency in charge of permitting. For others, it means volunteering to spread the word, joining a grassroots group, or even taking on leadership roles within these organizations. But the truth is, too few are willing to risk embarrassment or put aside their pride to publicly speak out. Each level of effort matters, but the sacrifices required to make meaningful change are often underestimated.

A wise pastor once told me, during a capital campaign for our church, that the goal wasn't equal gifts but equal sacrifice. Not everyone could contribute the same financially, but everyone had something to offer—whether it was their time, prayers, or support in other ways. The same principle applies here. It's not about who does the most but about everyone contributing what they can. God doesn't measure the size of the gift; He sees the heart behind the sacrifice.

When it comes to opposing renewable energy facilities, the sacrifice required might be time, energy, financial, or even stepping outside your comfort zone. After learning about the potential consequences these facilities could have on your community, apathy is not an option. As Jesus said, "If you have faith as small as a mustard



seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" (Matthew 17:20, NIV). But while faith can move mountains, placing all that faith in one person is ill-advised. True change requires collective action, not reliance on a single individual.

Over the past four years, I've seen this play out in Hardin County, Ohio—a rural community not far from where I live. For years, I've been approached by people seeking advice on how to stop the enormous influx of large wind and solar facilities in their area. I've been honest about the hard work, long hours, and family disruptions involved in leading such efforts. I've also been transparent about the reality: even with all this effort, success isn't guaranteed. Yet too often, people were unwilling to take up the mantle themselves. They placed their faith in me to solve their problem, but no single person can carry such a burden alone. Their hesitation and inaction left their community vulnerable.

This pattern of misplaced faith extends beyond renewable energy opposition. Many are pinning their hopes on a single leader, believing that one election or one person can change everything. This reminds me of the faith some have placed in President Trump. While I respect his campaign rhetoric and his stated support for rural communities (specifically as it relates to renewable energy), I cannot ignore the lessons from his book, *The Art of the Deal*. President Trump has always been a negotiator, and negotiations often involve compromise. It's not hard to imagine a scenario where concessions to the pro-renewable energy lobby might be made in exchange for advancing other policies he deems more critical.

This is not to say we shouldn't hope for his support but to caution against relying on it entirely. History teaches us that promises made on the campaign trail often face the reality of political trade-offs. Just as the potential adverse effects of renewable energy facilities have a

probability attached, so too does the likelihood of compromise in Washington. The only way to ensure our voices are heard is to amplify them through our collective efforts, not to rest our hopes on a single individual.

Now is not the time to gently lift your foot from the gas pedal. It is the time to press it to the floor. Those of you who feel hesitant to get involved, I challenge you to reconsider. Fear and pride are heavy burdens, but they pale in comparison to the weight of regret. Stand up for the principles you hold dear and the values you hope to pass on to your children. Take action now to ensure our government doesn't view our silence as consent or our opposition as negotiable.

This is also an opportunity for greater involvement in your local government. Volunteer to serve on your zoning board or even consider running for office. Local leadership is a powerful way to ensure that your voice is heard and your community's interests are protected.

Think of our opposition like tending a field. If we plant seeds but don't tend the soil, the harvest will fail. It takes effort—sometimes backbreaking effort—to ensure those seeds grow into something fruitful. The same is true for our communities. We must all contribute, in whatever ways we can, to nurture and protect what matters most.

If we unite, giving the gifts God has entrusted to us, we can make a lasting impact. Together, we can protect the health, safety, and welfare of our families and communities. Together, we can preserve our legacy and celebrate the heritage that defines us.

Let's honor the land and the people who came before us by standing firm for what we believe is right. Our future depends on it.

JW Thompson is a stubbornly determined amateur who helped lead a grassroots movement to stop a utility-scale solar project in northwest Ohio—the first ever denied by the state's regulatory board. Armed with 30+ years in civil engineering and surveying, an insatiable curiosity, and a knack for irritating his wife, JW spent countless hours researching renewable energy to support his cause. His efforts have since inspired and supported similar opposition groups across Ohio. Although confident in everything he writes, he readily admits he is human and prone to error, strongly encouraging everyone to perform their own due diligence and validate anything in his writing.

You can email JW Thompson at: renewable.concerns+TLBP@gmail.com