

LWV Ohio Statehouse Day – March 31, 2015

LWVO Lobbyist Report

Renewable Energy (LWVUS Positions on Natural Resources)

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2014 was a bad year for renewable electricity. Legislation was passed to freeze the goals that have been in place for six years. Until now the goals have increased annually. Under this bill the goal for 2014 (2.5%) was frozen at that level through 2016. As it stands, the goal will then again start to increase. Compounding the problem is removal of the restriction requiring that half of the renewable electricity come from Ohio. A separate bill extended the minimum distance of new wind farms from property lines. Now new industrial-scale wind farms are impractical. In fact, new wind farms have to be more than ten times as far from houses as fracking wells.

The legislation also established a committee with members from both chambers to recommend additional changes in Ohio's green energy law. As of late February, the committee had met three times and had only heard from representatives of the Public Utilities Commission and Ohio EPA. We will testify when the public is given the opportunity. Our approach will compare the large rise in electric bills with the small cost to consumers due to renewable energy. We will also point out how badly Ohio compares with other states in our region in our amount of renewable energy.

