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Hearing on Certain Expiring Tax Provisions

I am writing to voice my opposition to the Production Tax Credit for industrial wind projects. I have outlined below three fallacies and three truths about industrial wind. These projects are expensive, fail to create significant jobs and do not reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These energy projects have already received an excessive amount of subsidies and they are still not competitive with other energy forms. Finally, these projects cost residents and taxpayers more financial burdens through increased transportation costs and health issues.

Three Fallacies about Industrial Wind

The first, and worst, fallacy of industrial wind is that it reduces carbon dioxide emissions. Jonathan Carter addressed this issue, in *The Maine Woods*, a publication of the Forest Ecology Network. He notes:

Mountaintop industrial wind will not reduce our consumption of oil and will not reduce green house gas emissions. Only 1 per cent of the electricity in the United States is produced by oil....Three separate studies have now shown that industrial wind does not reduce greenhouse gasses.

http://www.forestecologynetwork.org/pdf%20files/TMW_Jan_2012_lores.pdf

Please stop supporting wind energy corporations with government handouts. I would like my tax money to be used for products and services that promote conservation and energy efficiency. Conserving energy and making more goods energy efficient provide a greater return on investment and do reduce greenhouse gasses.

A second fallacy of the industrial wind is that it creates jobs. For example, EverPower promised the residents of Howard, New York nine jobs at the new Howard Wind Project. The project is now up and running and only employs one person. Moreover, many workers have been displaced by this renewable energy source. Willem Post writing for The Energy Collective discusses this concern in a post dated February 24th, 2012 and titled: "Vermont Leaders Back Away from Renewable Energy Goals". He notes that: "Numerous studies in Spain, Italy, Denmark, England, etc., show, if subsidies cause some jobs to be created in the inefficient RE sector, the money taken from the private economy causes the loss of about 2-5 times that many jobs in other sectors." <http://theenergycollective.com/willem-post/77343/vermont-leaders-back-away-renewable-energy-goals>

I respectfully request that funds should be provided for programs that provide energy efficient appliances, homes, windows and insulation.

The third fallacy of industrial wind is that it needs more government funds, subsidies and tax breaks in order to support this young, green industry. The American Wind Association, the lobby for industrial wind companies was instrumental in extending the 1603 program for green energy companies based primarily on the promise that the industry would create thousands of jobs. According to Ianthe Jeanne Dugan and Justin Scheck in the Wall Street Journal article "Cost of \$10 Billion Stimulus Easier to Tally than New Jobs" of February 24, 2012: "Wind companies wound up with more than \$7 billion of the 1603 money, yet industry payrolls declined to 75,000 last year from a peak of 85,000 in 2009."

Please stop transferring the funds of the United States taxpayers to foreign and domestic wind energy corporations.

Three Facts about Industrial Wind

A fact about industrial wind installations is that the construction and operation of wind farms stress our infrastructure. The highways, roads and bridges of the United States are already in a state of disrepair. The proposed routes for many industrial wind project are simply too small and inadequate to handle the traffic necessary to construct an industrial wind farm. These small country roads and lanes will require substantial rebuilding in order to transport the large heavy vehicles that will move the nacelles, tower portions and the crane. In an article in Roads and Bridges, author Richard L. Kronick, points out that:

A single pass by any of these loads can cause major damage to a gravel-surfaced road. In addition, many legal loads of concrete rebar and gravel are hauled in to construct wind farms. To compound the matter, in northern climates, wind-power companies want to begin construction as early as possible in the spring-when roads are at their weakest. <http://www.roadsbridges.com/road-maintenance-damaging-wind-farms>

In addition, there are problems related to widening turns, replacing ditches, moving and replacing signs, etc. as well as constructing entrances to the access roads. Are all of these costs truly recovered from the wind energy companies, most of which are owned by foreign entities?

Instead of allowing wind energy companies to destroy our infrastructure, please use taxpayer funds to promote public transportation and rebuild inadequate roads and bridges.

A second fact about wind installations is that residents near wind turbine developments suffer needless anxiety, loss of quality of life and illnesses. The medical community needs to treat individuals who will suffer stress and illness from the construction of the turbines with noise, dust and traffic. Residents will become ill with the noise and shadow flicker created by the spinning turbines and will need to seek help from the medical profession. In a study of residents near an industrial wind turbine project in Australia, released in February 2012, researchers found that:

More than 70% of the respondents claimed that they had been negatively affected by noise from the wind energy facility, and more than 50% "moderately" (35%) or "very" (19%) negatively affected. Respondents affected by noise from the Waterloo wind energy Facility experienced it an average 2 days per week.

<http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/evaluation-of-wind-farm-noise-policies-in-south-australia/>

Please do not make more people ill by siting wind farms near their residences.

A third fact of industrial wind is that they destroy habitats and weaken populations of endangered animals and birds. The estimates of bird and bat deaths at wind farms are becoming more alarming every day.

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC), the nation's leading bird conservation organization, said today [2/12/12] that the build-out of wind energy proposed

by the federal government to meet a Department of Energy target of generating 20% of the nation's electricity through wind power is expected to kill at least one million birds per year by 2030, and probably significantly more. ABC considers the one million estimate, which is based on a 2005 paper [1] and widely cited by the wind industry, as likely a significant underestimate of bird mortality.

<http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/releases/110202.html>

The implication of this destruction of birds and bats is enormous. Without bats and birds, the impact of mosquitoes from rivers, lakes and wetlands will cost the nation, states, towns and counties much more in terms of control. How much will the nation need to spend to control mosquito infestations in the future?

Please do not use taxpayer funds to build wind turbines that decimate endangered bats and birds, instead support research to understand and treat "white-nose syndrome" in bats.

I urge you to END the Production Tax Credit, the Investment Tax Credit, and any other federal support of industrial wind energy.

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Mary Burns
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