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As the Executive Director of Class 4 Winds & Renewables based in Amarillo, Texas, I urge Congress to support, the extension of the renewable energy production tax credit (PTC) as part of any tax bill that moves forward this quarter. The PTC is the primary federal policy that is driving the growth of clean, affordable, homegrown American wind power, but with an uncertain policy future, businesses like mine and various others in Texas are facing dire consequences.

As a non-profit trade coalition working to advocate on behalf of the wind energy industry, C4W represents companies that employ hundreds of people in the Texas Panhandle, Western Oklahoma and Eastern New Mexico. Our membership includes; contractors who construct wind farms and transmission infrastructure; manufacturers and suppliers who are already seeing fewer orders because of the uncertainty behind the PTC beyond 2012; developers who have stopped planning until the PTC is renewed; and rural communities who are in desperate need of the boost in property tax revenue they will see as a result of a wind facility in their respective counties.

Because of the PTC in 2010, jobs created in the State of Texas totaled between 8,000 - 9,000; annual property tax payments by wind project owners totaled $110 million; and annual lease payments totaled $30 million, according to the American Wind Energy Association. Texas is a manufacturing leader in the wind energy industry as a result of its growth over the past decade. Texas hosts roughly 40 facilities that currently manufacture components for the wind energy industry, which translates to more than 1,000 manufacturing jobs in the state. With the current electrical transmission infrastructure being built in Texas, those numbers are bound to rise further, but only if the PTC is renewed beyond 2012.

On an industry-wide scale, the PTC has proven itself to be an effective tool to keep electricity rates low and encourage development of proven renewable energy projects. Equipped with the PTC, the wind energy industry has contributed impressively to U.S. economic development. Since 2005, the wind industry has spurred more than $60 billion of investment. Today, over 400 facilities across 43 states manufacture for the wind energy industry. US wind turbine manufacturing has grown 12-fold – 60% of a wind turbine’s value is now produced here in America, as compared to 25% prior to 2005. Further, costs have been reduced over 90% since 1980, recently driven by a surge in game-changing technological advances. With its ability to guarantee firm prices in long-term contracts, wind energy has reduced electricity rate risk for American homes and businesses and provided 35% of all new U.S. power capacity in the last four years.

To foster the growth of an industry that is doing a tremendous amount to contribute to economic development, reinvigorate the American manufacturing sector, and diversify our electricity supply, we urge you to act quickly to extend the PTC. We appreciate your support for America's wind energy industry.

Sincerely
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