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United States Committee on Ways & Means

Hearing on member proposals related to certain tax provisions that expired or will expire in 2012

Distinguished members:

I am writing to you today to express my **strong opposition** to any extension of the production tax credit or the investment tax credit for renewable energy. My understanding is you are once again considering these credits to support the wind industry. If this was indeed a viable industry, the wind developers would not need this level of continued support. This is not a fledgling technology or industry. This is a 30 plus year old industry, which has grown only because of the insertion of billions of taxpayer dollars since its beginning. If this was a viable industry the private sector would have built it, just like the computer industry, and the cell phone industry to name a few. The public has virtually nothing positive to show for these tax expenditures, not cheaper electricity, not greener electricity and not enough jobs to justify spending billions.

Many promises have been made by this industry over the years. This industry has been created by large multinational companies using very established lobbyists, and public relation firms to convince you, our elected officials, of the benefits of wind turbines. The truth is none of the stated benefits have materialized, not 1 ton of carbon has been offset, not 1 traditional source of electricity has been turned off. This is the result after tens of thousands of these turbines have been erected with billions of tax dollars supporting them. What little energy they produce is almost worthless to our grid, because it only creates electricity when the wind blows. It simply is NOT a reliable source of electricity that can be effectively used by our grid. The only promise the developers manage to keep is the outsize returns by way of various tax credits given to huge corporations and investment pools. The size of the most modern of these turbines over 500 feet tall with a propeller which spans 2 and 1/2 acres spinning at over 200 miles and hour. These turbines spoil the view and quiet for thousands of acres surrounding each turbine. They can be seen from over 25 miles away and heard from over 2 miles away regularly, not occasionally, as the industry would have you believe. The developers have publicly stated these make as much noise as your refrigerator! Ridiculous! These developers have run out of sparsely populated areas (to waste taxpayer dollars where few citizens notice) and are now placing them in much more populated areas in NY, New England, the Great Lakes areas and so on. Much the same as the cigarette industry (with government support) denying the health of effects of tobacco, these industrialists deny these industrial

installations can cause health issues when sited too close to humans. The evidence is accumulating daily from all around the world about the problems these installations are causing populations living near these installations. The developers downplay the slaughter brought forth on avian and bat populations. Grazing animals abandon these developed sites when they have the choice.

In my town, a wind developer has proposed an 18 MW project in an area with over 300 people living within 2 miles, many less than 1 mile. The cost of the project was estimated at \$40,000,000. Our average wind speed is around 12.6 miles/hour, which barely makes it a viable site. When we calculate the average wind speed and a 25% utilization rate of the turbines, the project would produce roughly \$800,000/yr. in electricity. So before any operating expenses, based on a generous 25 life expectancy of the turbines it will generate \$20,000,000 in revenue. No business would do this! Each turbine loses money you can't make a profit by building more! You can only lose more money and then beg for more tax bailouts! Once again this is not a new industry, they have been taking our tax dollars for 30 years, and what do we have to show for it? There are over 30,000 wind turbines in America and they do not produce even 1% of our energy needs. Wind is intermittent, and by its very nature cannot be a reliable form of energy.

Please stop the funding of this destructive industry. The wind energy swindle is diverting our ever more precious tax dollars from being used to help our poor and support industries which actually create jobs in companies which provide benefits to our society as a whole. On top of everything I've said, many of these dollars end up going to foreign corporations adding insult to injury for the American taxpayers. \$14 billion last year alone was given to them via the production tax credit, the more recent investment tax credit, and other tax and regulatory provisions, as well as loan guarantees and outright grants. Our government needs to be more fiscally responsible.

We absolutely need a sustainable energy policy, but I urge you to allow the scientific community to develop reliable solutions, not lobbyist, not snake oil salesmen. Please be responsible with our limited tax dollars and END the Production Tax Credit, the Investment Tax Credit, and any other Federal support of industrial wind energy. Any thing less would not be good stewardship. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Larry Frigault