

September 12, 2006

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20502

Mr. James L. Connaughton
Chairman
White House Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. President and Chairman Connaughton:

We are writing regarding the future of wind power as a clean and renewable energy source serving our domestic needs now and into the future.

As you know, the Department of Defense (DOD) is studying the effects of wind projects on military readiness. While the study is ongoing, the DOD and Department of Homeland Security released an interim
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policy that resulted in the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) issuance of "Notices of Presumed Hazard" to wind projects located within a radar line of site of the National Air Defense and Homeland Security Radars. "Line of site" is defined as any windmill within a 60-mile radius of a radar center or tower, which means that projects across the nation are impacted, including 13 projects in Midwest States. As a result, wind development has been halted in its tracks, with the threat of permanent derailment.

Although we eagerly await the findings of the DOD study, we are concerned that the study will report on interference from wind turbines on radar systems, but will not adequately examine effective mitigation opportunities. Therefore, we are concerned about the impact of the report on overall wind production.

Homeland security must remain a top priority – and we do not believe that our nation's defense policy should be hindered. At the same time, our nation's energy policy also must remain a significant priority. Already, European countries have made significant advances in the production of wind power. In the United Kingdom, Germany, and Belgium, wind power is a proven source of efficient, economical, and environmentally friendly energy.

Our nation has just begun to take steps toward using wind to reduce U.S. dependence on imported energy. In June, the Department of Energy teamed up with the American Wind Energy Association and National Renewable Energy Laboratory to develop an action plan that will provide up to 20% of the nation's electricity with wind energy. But the current wind development delays may interfere with this goal. In addition, continued delays will jeopardize the ability of wind developers to benefit from the federal wind tax credit, which expires at the end of 2007.

The Administration's commitment to the 20% goal demonstrates a prevailing view that military radars and wind farms can coexist. In fact, we have been advised that officials from the DOD, along with the Department of Energy, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the Department of Interior, have formed a steering group to discuss and evaluate the future of wind power in our nation, in light of DOD's findings.

It is essential that this interagency group has your support as they balance the important task of protecting our national security with the need to increase our domestic energy security. Therefore, while discussions are ongoing, we respectfully request that you ensure that these agencies strongly consider the various mitigation techniques available and that they carefully evaluate the broader importance of using wind production as a renewable energy source.

With your assistance, wind power can play an important role in reducing our dependence on foreign energy. We look forward to working with you to ensure that this clean and renewable alternative plays a large role in increasing our nation's energy security.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

Gil Gutknecht
Member of Congress

Ron Kind
Member of Congress

Ralph Hall
Member of Congress

Mark Udall
Member of Congress

Judy Biggert
Member of Congress

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Collin Peterson
Member of Congress

Thomas Petri
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

Charles Bass
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Tim Johnson
Member of Congress

David Obey
Member of Congress

Mark Kennedy
Member of Congress

Jay Inslee
Member of Congress

Mark Kirk
Member of Congress

Steve Israel
Member of Congress

Wayne Gilchrest
Member of Congress

James Langevin
Member of Congress

Sue Kelly
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Stephanie Herseth
Member of Congress

John Conyers
Member of Congress

Martin Sabo
Member of Congress

Earl Pomeroy
Member of Congress

Jim Moran
Member of Congress

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Raul Grijalva
Member of Congress

Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

Luis Gutierrez
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Dennis Kucinich
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

Carolyn McCarthy

Joe Barton

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

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