

To:
Micki Bertrand
Administrative Assistant
New England States Committee on Electricity(NESCOE)

Dear Micki Bertrand;

I am writing in response to the extension of time that was provided to people interested in offering points of concern regarding the New England governors and their push for procurement of renewable energy. The 'goldrush' toward renewables is a pressing issue given the gravity of the topic of climate change for our nation and of global warming for the world as a whole. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

The fact that we must be investing time and money for sustainable and renewable energy alternatives to provide security for our nation on many levels is a pressing challenge. However, the fact that industrial scale wind seems to be where a large amount of focus (and money!) is being misdirected, it leaves much to be rationally considered before New England, and particularly Vermont, is overwhelmed with (ridgeline wind)projects of such industrial scale and scope. Ratepayers will take the brunt of the costs while it is understand that **long-term, permanent** jobs are not something that comes with industrial-scale wind project installation. There ends up being 1 permanent job per 10 turbine towers, per project. Ratepayers' cost per kilowatt hour is high while the municipal costs to host towns is also high when one realizes that roads and roadways and other infrastructure need incredibly large-scaled alterations, and when new, required fire services are taken into account for such scale projects. And property values of those in proximity to industrial power plants also gravely affect tax bases. On top of all this, we have the fact that carbon emissions are not reduced by the wind projects' electricity production. We can reference realistically that NO nuclear plants have shut down anywhere worldwide due to installations of wind "parks." Baseload power (whatever it is!) has to remain in effect and online **even with** windpower up-and-running: nothing is replaced in this 'renewables' equation, only added. In Europe they have realized the grievous folly that is industrial windpower. New England is not going to make a name for itself as being 'cutting edge,' with regard to rushing into wind production on industrial-scale levels. We are BEHIND the curve, in that respect!!

Vermont, in particular, is known for its mountains and THESE are what must be preserved. Ridgelines are tourist attractions. Ridgelines are part of the economic and cultural base of our state. Ridgelines are natural,

ancient erosion protection. And forested ridges and acreage of habitat blocks are resources themselves to be protected & preserved!!! Forested acreages act as buffer for both erosion and carbon emissions. Forested acreages themselves are carbon sinks and natural erosion control; and the disturbance/destruction of these makes no sense during this time in history when rain events are more and more frequently monumental and climate change brings unpredictability. It would also seem not a time to add **more variables** with industrial wind power in particular, with regard to the variables associated with it: around issues & the lack of long-term study of social/economic impacts and the known & unknown undue adverse environmental impacts!!

The policies on Vermont's renewable energy have not been well thought out, and are utility- and developer-centric! In the rush for renewables, we haven't placed sound thought nor policy upon what is sustainable and healthy for Vermont. We need to maintain the integrity of our mountains, for the economic, social and environmental stability of the state and its people. We need to instead focus on where greatest difference can be made quickest. It is not by making corporations more fortified and giving developers more financial resources on the backs of working Vermonters. Health issues need to be explored regard to industrial-sized wind plants and with regard to **turbine sound/infrasound effects upon the health of those who must LIVE & SLEEP & attempt to maintain a quality of life in proximity to massive turbines**. Vermonters do not want to have sleep disturbance and health impacts due to this very basic human need affect daily performance. The sanctity and value of our very properties and homes are threatened and devalued, if we let (ridgeline) development run amok in the state, in a RUSH, without care and study and necessary planning!!! All these things must be taken into account before RUSHING into renewables!! The governors must protect **their state's people**-- not facilitate the processes for corporations and developers to swoop in and destroy natural resources & devour funds and monies that could be better spent in a state like Vermont, where we are not ranked high (in fact Vermont is 27th) in the nation's wind corridor and our energy demand is not high comparatively with that of the nation. In addition, while our adverse impacts suffered here would be monumentally large for permitting industrial wind development to overwhelm our Green Mountain state and its ridges, the gain would not be for the public good, and the greenhouse gas emissions would not be reduced by more than 1 or 2% by the implementing of this grossly destructive, inefficient method of renewable energy production.

We would notice more immediate gains by continuing what we already do. But shift money and energy production from the corporations and developers back into the hands of the people and the local governments. Photovoltaics need to be further explored as option and expand this more & more!!! Think solar energy on small scale. And in community-based efforts where communities get to decide what is healthy and sustainable but not FORCED upon them by state and federal mandates!!! Create incentives for ratepayers to implement solar. Help to make solar energy methods INCREASINGLY affordable for the consumer **not** monopolized by corporations. Isn't there something about simple grid-tied inverters?!? Let's heat water with solar energy and make it broadly available. In the Northeast especially, geothermal heat pumps accompanying continued increases in weatherization initiatives/incentives could make a significant impact on fossil fuel consumption!!! THERE ARE effective alternatives to industrial scale wind to be explored! Can we honestly say the alternatives being explored, or even considered, enough?

In addition, the SPEED program creates problems where Vermont allows utilities to sell renewable energy credits out-of-state, and this causes industrial-scale development to accelerate here in Vermont---even when it's not wanted or even appropriate!!!!!!!! In addition, this causes a suppression of renewable energy development in other states where it might be better suited and even necessary!!! Renewable energy standards could maybe be much better met by having utilities purchase renewables energy credits FROM property/home owners and businesses who could be generating their own power with these previously mentioned ideas!!! This would seem far better for the overall economy and the environment, more effective, more immediate!

In Vermont, it is in fact less rigorous than policy might 'suggest' for developers to move in and apply for development where section 248 and the "public good over-ride" was made FOR such developers! Bring back Act 250 with full compliance! The Public Service Board should be elected officials (and INDEPENDENT of the governor!) who are required to have backgrounds in health and environmental fields. Town plans should be honored, not merely considered, by the Public Service Board. Give local control to the local governments and this would ensure truly rigorous process for development. If alternatives exist for siting, for safety, for health and environmental standards, those should be studied objectively and exhausted completely **first**.

There are exciting and healthy and positive ways that actually could foster communities and make Vermont truly a leader in positive efforts that

empower the people and communities, while creating NEW models for healthy sustainability. Large-scale corporate models (and corporate culture of excessive oversight and domination and other such cultural characteristics) are not where I think Vermont and its communities want to be looking, when we think sustainability for a future. That tired model is what got the nation into its current mess. To be truly leading, maybe Vermont, maybe even New England and its states could be really thinking about its people, its greatest resource. **Protect and preserve what we have.** Exploiting for short-sighted monetary, corporate gain is not in line with the **true New England values of conservation, preservation, efficiency, small-scale, local control.** **These values have been moved away from. It's time to look at the integrity of what we have and maintain it** (in our local governments, in our local preservation of resources on every level. It should not be about giving our power (in a few definitions of that word!) and our money and our environment over to large corporate control and large government control.

Respectfully & hopefully submitted,
Vanessa M. Holmquist
Pittsford, Vermont