

STATEMENT BEFORE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES;
CASE NO.19-T-0041; CANISTEO WIND ENERGY

DECEMBER 11, 2019; EVENING SESSION.

Your honors, I thank you once again for the opportunity to speak today.

I want to first reiterate what I stated this afternoon. That is, how important it is to remember that this proposed transmission system will not exist in isolation, but will be inseparably linked to the proposed Canisteco wind development. Thus, all of the impacts of one are of the other also.

The much touted benefits attributed to wind energy, I have learned through two years of study, are far outweighed by its shortcomings. As one small part of a diversified power system, wind might be acceptable, but not as the single salvation it is advertised as. A salvation based mainly on an uninformed, unsubstantiated, politically motivated agenda forced upon us from on high.

Why then, has wind energy gained such seeming support in the face of so many well documented shortcomings? The earnest, enthusiastic developer's representatives really don't give a damn about clean energy; they don't give a damn about CO2 emissions or clean air, and they don't give a damn about you, your health, your community, or the long term economic or social impacts on it. Their one sole motivation is M-O-N-E-Y. I'll explain why.

A wind project and its infrastructure is built and survives almost solely through subsidies, another name for which is your tax dollars. These subsidies flow in from numerous sources at the federal, state, county, and municipal levels in too many different forms to list here. Most important is that the subsidies are given based on the potential output capacity of the entire project, not on the number of turbines as is commonly thought. In fact, once built, the turbines do not even have to be operating; it's only the potential output that is considered. Hence, the greater the possible generating capacity, the greater the subsidies, with little incentive for operation beyond that.

Some other important points bear consideration. We have heard the description of a new dedicated transmission line which will connect the Canisteco project with the existing grid at the South Hornell substation. What happens to the power after that is the subject of some concern. It has been established that recently approved nearby projects will be limited in the amount of power they feed into the existing grid, which is already nearing its peak carrying capacity. Why then, why would you build additional wind "farms" also with excess capacity? You already know the answer: money, and subsidies based on potential generating capacity.

These new installations must already reduce their output in times of peak load such as summer, exactly when the power is needed most.

And it doesn't stop there: A recent audit discovered that the Niagara Falls hydroelectric power facility, the most renewable energy source of them all, has been ordered to intentionally reduce their output so the grid may accommodate more wind generated power; in doing so trading power costing four cents per kwh for that costing 13,5 cents per kwh. If allowed, this one source of hydroelectric power alone could generate an additional 1.5 TERRAwatts of electricity, enough to power an additional 150,000 homes.

Why do we need wind???

If you are thinking "why not build a whole new transmission system?" It has been tried. There was a recent proposal to build an entirely new trunk line across the length of the Southern Tier, to New York City, the destination of all upstate wind generated power. In a legal challenge, the system was soundly defeated by a coalition of Southern Tier townships through which the line would pass, without providing any benefit to them whatsoever.

On another point, you have heard, or will hear of job creation from this project. As with the windmills themselves, this employment bonanza will be short lived, and will benefit mostly out of area workers. Invenergy admits that only five to seven employees will be needed on a permanent basis. An interesting fact: the Steuben County IDA contributes heavily to these projects in the interest of job development. The PARIS report, the Public Authorities Reporting Information System a publicly available annual document generated by the IDA, shows that in 2017, \$2.3 million was given to the Howard project in the form of tax exemptions, in return for PILOT payments of \$479,000, for a project which employs a total of two persons. Numbers are proportionately similar for the Cohocton and Marsh Hill projects. Remember, those tax breaks must be made up by someone. Ask yourself who, when you receive your next property tax increase, as we just did in the Town of Canisteo.

Did we really receive a decent return on our investment?

And where will the power go once it leaves the area? It is required that a purchaser be contracted as a condition of approval, in this case being the New York Power Authority, of New York City. However, we know nothing of this arrangement, the one in which we are the supplier, since the terms appear to be confidential, even after one local entity has filed a full year of FOIL requests.

I recently read a fascinating book detailing the evolution of the Cold War in post-WW 2 Europe. The author, in describing a well-known world leader stated: “He came across as a straight talker, honest and smooth as Hell. When it suited him, he could be a good listener. At the...conference, he followed his usual practice of ignoring facts when it did not suit his argument, while relying on ambiguity to win compliance.”

That passage jumped off the page at me as an almost perfect description of wind developers. In two years of personal study from many, many sources, I’ve learned that trying to extract honest, accurate, complete, and consistent information from these individuals is almost impossible. They will avoid direct questions, instead giving irrelevant, vague, non-committal answers, contradict themselves, or outright lie if it suits their cause. I’ll give you just one example:

A promise was made in writing to the Town of Canisteo to provide a letter of credit guaranteeing \$10,000 for the decommissioning of each turbine before a permit for construction is issued. (This although their own study gives a minimum dismantling cost of \$179,000). At a subsequent hearing, under oath, a company official stated he saw no reason to post that guarantee until the project is in full operation. What happens if the developer defaults; a crane falls and kills someone, or a partially built windmill topples, all of which have happened? Who will be held liable, and why the inexplicable change in terms?

These tactics appear to be standard operating practices in the industry. It is also what leads me to conclude that in all my years of dealing with people, organizations, corporations, enterprises of any kind, as a group, wind developers are the most arrogant, the most deceitful, the most contemptible, the most hypocritical, the most ruthless group of pathological individuals that I have ever encountered. They are bent on achieving their own goals, regardless of circumstances. I believe them to have little or no integrity or trustworthiness, and under no circumstances do I believe that they, or the product they offer would be of benefit to the environment, my community, or to the personal health and well-being of anyone affected. As with other concerns I have expressed previously to the Board via their website and public statements. I therefore believe that applications for both parts of this project should be summarily denied.

Incidentally, the well-known world leader described was Joseph Stalin.

Thank you,

James Koegel