

I write in support of Community Owned Wind Energy Facilities, and against industrial scale "Wind Farms".

Renewable energy is an important component of our low carbon future and community owned and locally load balanced wind energy generators can be a feasible, economic alternative.

Despite the existing peer reviewed not supporting the impact of wind farms on health. I have experienced the health impacts first hand. The constant uncertainty about the impact the development will have on your future ability to live where you have chosen to live has impacted on my direct family and has resulted in my in-laws selling the house they had built with their own hands and moving into the suburbs. I believe the main health impact of turbines is anxiety, and that this anxiety produces the symptoms of "Wind Turbine Syndrome", such as sleeplessness, nausea, vertigo, headaches.

One of the major sources of anxiety is that people directly impacted by the turbines face uncertainty about their property values. Again this is shown by the land prices around the Pipers Creek, Baynton and Sidonia area, which have been flat for the past four years due to a proposed development. This resulted in my in-laws property being on the market for 2 years before being sold for a price 80,000 below the initially offered price.

The true ongoing benefit of the wind industry is for international firms such as Vestas and RePower, there is very little local involvement as developers and maintenance staff are located centrally and service a number of facilities.

Only some of the land owners impacted by turbines benefit from a new source of income, the majority of surrounding farms are impacted without compensation, which results in community division and conflict. Again, my personal experience is that we have lived through 6 years of community division in our region. The reason for this is that friends that benefitted from turbines could not longer associate with those adversely impacted. To the point where neighbours actively ignored each other in the street, this continues to this day and may never be resolved. This destruction of the community extends to the activities of the CFA and the SES, to the point where the resentment may stop people from assisting neighbours in their time of need.

There may be broad support for wind farms, as the majority of people are not impacted by them, it is only the lives of the few neighbouring properties that are severely impacted. It would appear that the few can be sacrificed, without compensation, for the many.

In Victoria, I have requested information on a number of occasions from the Energy Ministers. This request is simple, and after 30 years with wind turbines in the grid, the answer should also be known. The question is, "How much brown coal has been saved through the use of the wind turbines". The answer was not provided. The reason that Victoria does not know the answer is due to the fact that energy from Latrobe is dumped in preference for renewable generators, in essence, no coal is saved, which leads to the question of "what is the point of industrial scale wind?"

If this Senate inquiry could establish this benefit, then it would go a long

way to silencing the critics of turbines and would garner my support, and the support of many other opponents of industrial scale turbines. However, this benefit, if known by the Victorian Energy Minister, was not made known to me or the broader community.

I believe there is a solution to this problem, as proposed by Sir Alan Jones from the UK, which is to locally load balance the renewable energy and have gas turbines or other schedulable generators closely aligned to community scale turbine developments. These community owned turbines can be managed and agreed to by the community for the direct benefit of the community. The scale of the turbines can also be sized to suit the community need, rather than provide an economic return to the power retailers.

Local load balancing also reduces the demand at the node, which enables the grid to be load balanced and overall demand to be reduced, which will enable the reduction of coal consumption, which is the goal of the operation.

Thanks for your interest and consideration, please make this work for the tax payers of Australia.

Simon Rush.