

From Godfrey Bloom MEP

Please see below an open letter Godfrey Bloom sent to Mr Miliband.

E Miliband Esq

Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change

House of Commons

London

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Dear Mr Miliband

It would appear that as usual this government has not thought through the dire consequences of its actions. This time on wind turbines.

Industrial wind turbines have minimal impact on carbon emissions. The European experience is instructive. Denmark, the world's most wind-intensive nation with more than 6,000 turbines generating 19% of its electricity, has yet to close a single fossil fuel plant. It requires 50% more coal-generated electricity to cover wind power's unpredictability, pollution and carbon dioxide emissions have risen (by 36% in 2006 alone). Flemming Nissen, the head of development at West Danish generating company ELSAM (one of Denmark's largest energy utilities) tells us that "wind turbines do not reduce carbon dioxide emissions." "The German experience is no different. Der Spiegel reports that "Germany's CO2 emissions haven't been reduced by even a single gram," and additional coal and gas-fired plants have been constructed to ensure reliable delivery. Indeed, recent academic research shows that wind power may actually increase greenhouse gas emissions in some cases, depending on the carbon-intensity of back-up generation required because of its intermittent character.

These turbines are not a viable economic alternative to other energy conservation options. Again, the Danish experience is instructive. Its electricity generation costs are the highest in Europe (15 cents/kwh). Niels Gram of the Danish Federation of Industries says, "windmills are a mistake and economically make no sense." Aase Madsen, the Chairman of Energy Policy in the Danish Parliament calls it "a terribly expensive disaster." The U.S. Energy Information Administration reported in 2008, on a dollar per MWh basis, the U.S. government subsidizes wind at \$23.34 - compared to reliable energy sources: natural gas at 25 cents; coal at 44 cents; hydro at 67 cents; and nuclear at \$1.59, leading to what some U.S. commentators call "a huge corporate welfare feeding frenzy." The Economist magazine in a recent editorial, "Wasting Money on Climate Change" notes that each tonne of emissions avoided due to subsidies to renewable energy such as wind power would cost somewhere between \$69 and \$137.

A growing body of scientific and medical evidence suggests that the health effects on those subjected to long and frequent periods of pulsating, low-frequency noise associated with

wind turbines include sleep disturbances leading to depression, chronic stress, migraines, nausea and dizziness, exhaustion and anger, memory loss and cognitive difficulties, cardiac arrhythmias, increased heart rate and blood pressure. Kamperman and James list no fewer than 13 studies that show noise from wind turbines at night can disturb residents more than 2 km away. Those living close to the source of noise can develop what has been termed "Vibroacoustic Disease (VAD). Noise from wind turbines exhibit the characteristics of noise experienced in various occupations (aircrews, aircraft maintenance workers, ship workers and an islander population exposed to environmental infra and low frequency noise) and has been shown to lead to VAD. Complaints from people living near wind turbines are the same as those from persons who have developed VAD. Also, flicker from turbines at a minimum are disruptive and annoying. Flicker poses a potential risk of photosensitive seizures. The refusal of the government to order full independent environmental assessments, including assessments of health effects, of any wind turbine project, undermines the credibility of claims that there will be no such negative effects.

While wind developers deny that industrial wind turbines have any effect on property values of neighbouring residents, simple common sense suggests otherwise: how many readers familiar with this development would be prepared to buy recreational or retirement homes in this area, even at sharply discounted prices? In a recreational area that promotes its scenic attractions, like The Yorkshire Dales or the West Country, these effects on property values are likely to be even more pronounced. Refusal by either wind developers or the government to provide legally enforceable guarantees of compensation for property value losses warrants further skepticism over the claim that there will be no such losses.

Even if one thinks that wind turbines are a good idea environmentally and economically, there is a simple solution to the impact on rural residents, who are being conscripted to bear most of the burden of solving a problem they mostly did not create. Ensure that set-backs from residences conform to international standards as endorsed by renowned medical and scientific bodies that have closely examined the health and environmental risks. The French Academy of Medicine recommends 1.5 km, pending further research on health effects of persistent exposure to low-intensity noise. Alternatively, the government could concentrate wind farms in more remote or sparsely populated areas, as in much of Europe. These measures would also minimize negative impacts on property values. But these are modest palliatives to the fundamental policy flaws and do not address industrial wind power's failure to reduce significantly carbon emissions and its exorbitant cost to taxpayers and consumers.

I urge you to put an immediate moratorium on wind farms until a serious independent survey is undertaken.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bloom

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