

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 2, 2006

André van Tilborg, Ph.D.
Acting Deputy Undersecretary of Defense
(Science & Technology)
Department of Defense
3080 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Dr. van Tilborg:

We write today to express our support for responsible development of wind power and request that the Department of Defense not unnecessarily obstruct the implementation of this major source of domestic, clean energy.

As you know, last year's Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 109-63) called for the Department of Defense to submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees on the effects of windmill farms on military readiness. We understand that the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security issued a joint interim policy on proposed windmill locations on March 21, 2006, to be in place while the report is being compiled. A portion of that interim policy states, "The DOD/DHS Long Range Radar Joint Program Office Interim Policy is to contest any establishment of windmill farms within radar line of site of the National Air Defense and Homeland Security Radars." Since much of the nation is in radar line of site, this interim policy has a sweeping effect. Prohibiting, even temporarily, the development of wind energy facilities within those areas would be a considerable setback for efforts to increase our country's energy independence.

As you work to provide the report required by P.L. 109-63, we urge you to collaboratively engage with other agencies that have knowledge that could complement that of your Department. For example, officials at the Department of Energy and the Federal Aviation Administration have expertise that could be utilized to ensure that the report includes possible mitigation techniques to reduce or eliminate any negative effects that wind facilities may have on radar installations. As you know, multiple wind installations have been built and are operating within the radar line of site of Department of Defense and Homeland Security radar installations, without any problems that we are aware of. Furthermore, it is crucial that the report required by P.L. 109-63 is completed as quickly as possible in order for our nation to fully utilize its wind energy potential.

We believe that our nation's defense policy and energy policy are interconnected. To this end, while not commenting on any specific projects, we support the development of alternative, sustainable, and renewable sources of energy that can be harnessed here at home, such as wind power. We look forward to working with you to ensure that our defense policy and our energy policy are strong and consistent with each other.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dick Durbin", written over a horizontal line.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Russ Feingold", written over a horizontal line.

Erwin K. Degen

Kent Lamm

Herb Kohl

Buch