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Subject Public Comment

Declaration of Barbara Ashbee, provided as public Comment on the Joint California Public Utilities Commission and Bureau of Land Management Draft Environmental Impact Report /Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIR/DEIS) for the East County Substation/Tule Wind/Energia Sierra Juarez Gen-Tie Projects: State Clearinghouse No. 2009121079 DOI-BLM-CA-D070-2010-0027-EIS (ECO Sub); DOI-BLM-CA-D070-2008-0040-EIS (Tule Wind)

Wind energy installations are causing health problems around the world. Sadly for the victims, there appears to be a concentrated effort to ignore and/or trivialize the impacts that these industrial installations are having on people. Well aware of the health issues and the fact that people are being forced to abandon their homes, many governments are ignoring the issues by continuing the push ahead with yet more wind energy projects. Sadly it is clear that they support the wind lobby groups and developers over the safety of their own constituents. It is an appalling situation and it must stop.

The only true way to determine what would be a safe setback for industrial wind turbines and their substations is to complete proper independent health studies. There have been no human health studies completed by any government and yet globally families continue suffering severe adverse effects since the turbines and substations started up too close to their homes.

The size of the wind installation or whether it is a community owned or corporate owned program is irrelevant. There is no benefit to polling people about waived or non-waivable participation. All residents, participating or non-participating must be protected, as should the technicians working with them. Whether one reaps any financial reward has nothing to do with whether they are experiencing adverse health effects. There are leaseholders making an income who regret their decision and are now suffering.

It is fact that excessive noise (audible) and low frequency noise (much of it inaudible but which penetrates walls and creates vibration) is being emitted from industrial wind turbines and they are causing health problems for those living in their midst. There is enough evidence from first-hand accounts to support this.

It is unconscionable to continue down the path of industrial wind turbine installations until independent 3rd party health studies are completed. No government mandate or policy should be allowed to affect the citizens in such a harmful way as these wind turbine installations have. To continue would be a reckless breach of public safety.

In Ontario there are 2 legal challenges underway pertaining to the disregard for health issues by the provincial government who has been well informed of the distress families are experiencing. The 'precautionary principle' has certainly been ignored.

There were no front end health studies conducted to research this new technology and sadly after 4 years authorities still publicly deny the harm being perpetrated on families.

There are 115 people in Ontario reporting adverse health effects in response to a voluntary health survey that was created in 2009. This is very alarming considering there are only 690 turbines in operation. In addition, the number of adversely affected residents is seriously underreported due to many situational pressures. Among them are the fear of loss of privacy at filling out the survey (although identities are held strictly confidential), fear of reduced property values if one speaks publicly, fear of exposing children and other family members to the social stigma and backlash of speaking out against something "green" due to years of intense environmental social marketing and fear of causing upset to neighbours and others in their community. These are all valid concerns.

Please consider that there are families who currently are suffering daily in their homes. These families were fine before the wind development started up and then they got sick. When they leave their homes they get better, when they go back they get sick. Many have to sleep elsewhere. Some drive away from their homes and sleep in their vehicles, some are renting safe houses (a heavy added financial burden) and some families are split up, living with friends and relatives. These people need help. They do not want to see more families hurt with additional wind turbines. These families, like yours, deserve to live in a healthy and safe environment in their own home.

All municipalities must first and foremost protect the residents.

Please put a halt to any more wind development until the proper health studies have been completed to determine safe regulations.

Literature reviews sponsored by government or wind lobby panels cannot determine health effects of wind energy. For instance, Dr. Arlene King, the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health, who is well aware of the victims, released a literature review in which she concluded there was no link to adverse health effects caused by wind turbines. It is a very important to note that she did not contact even one of the many victims when working on her report. She certainly knew about them and one must question this omission of the obvious by Ontario's top doctor when conducting her 'research'.

Please visit www.windvigilance.com and select the Society News tab to locate an in-depth analysis on both Dr. King's and the AWEA/CanWEA sponsored health reports. This site also has information on a control study of residents at a wind installation at Mars Hill, Maine by Dr. Nissenbaum. http://www.windvigilance.com/society_news.aspx

You can also access the WindVOiCe health survey results, found under its own tab.

http://www.windvigilance.com/windvoice_home.aspx

My husband and I had to leave our home permanently and I personally know many others who have had to abandon their homes under incredible hardship while waiting for our government to step up and do the right thing. Sleep deprivation and sleep disturbance are at the top of the list of complaints. Tinnitus, chest pressure, heart palpitations, cognitive problems, headaches, stomach aches and dizziness are just some of the symptoms that both my husband and I experienced. We were healthy before the start-up of the wind turbines. After the start-up we got progressively sick living in our own home and ultimately had to leave. Our symptoms went away after we moved. The added anger, stress, and feelings of defeat by the injustice of a dismissive government weigh heavily on every family and add to the overall despair. Victims everywhere have lost trust and faith in their government, a government that is supposed to be protecting them, a government that is using the residents own tax money to fight against them by using splashy colourful advertisements on television, print and websites pushing the renewable wind energy mandate. This same government has signed secret deals with foreign corporations to press ahead while families are sick. How can one reconcile this?

Please do not let this happen to your citizens. Please research very carefully the consequences of poorly laid out plans by aggressive policies and developers alike.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission. Everyone must agree that preserving the health and well-being of our families, of our pets, our livestock and wildlife is of paramount concern and is necessary for a healthy community.

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