

Multi-Municipal Wind Turbine Working Group

Comprised of Elected Officials from Bruce, Dufferin,
Grey, Huron, Perth and Wellington Counties

February 23, 2012

To all ROMA members and Conference delegates:

Yesterday's letter from the Board of Directors of ROMA requires clarification. The people who are going to be walking out on Premier Dalton McGuinty are not some radical-fringe opponents of Green Energy but rather members of your Association who have actual firsthand experience in dealing with the impact of industrial wind turbines on our communities.

With all due respect for ROMA's past successes, industrial wind turbines are the largest planning issue currently facing many municipalities across rural Ontario. The Green Energy Act stripped the municipalities of their planning authority to respond to the concerns of their citizens. People are getting sick and are being forced from their homes. Citizens are banding together and taking every means possible to resist new turbine developments. Municipal Councils are now caught between valid local concerns and a provincial policy that is out of touch with what is actually happening in rural Ontario.

We are not alone in expressing concerns with the Green Energy Program and wind turbines:

- The December 2011 **Ontario Auditor General's** Report noted that wind turbines are not replacing coal plants. Nor are they saving greenhouse gas emissions. They require additional fossil-fuel gas generation back-up because their production is unpredictable, intermittent, and cannot be stored. The Auditor General observed that this means consumers pay twice for wind energy, adding to skyrocketing electricity costs that are posing a real threat to jobs.
- The **Ontario Federation of Agriculture**, representing 38,000 farm families across Ontario, in January 2012 called the current situation in rural Ontario 'untenable' and asked the Ontario government to suspend awarding projects until the issues with the program were resolved. The **Christian Farmers Association of Ontario** has called for a similar moratorium.
- **79 rural municipalities** have passed a range of motions that call for a moratorium on wind turbine installations or other actions until the issues are resolved.
- In Southern Ontario, elected officials representing municipalities from 6 counties have come together to form the **Multi-Municipal Wind Turbine Working Group** which meets monthly to coordinate responses to well-financed wind energy developers.

As a representative of Rural Ontario, ROMA must be aware of the depth of these concerns and we hope to hear at the conference the steps that ROMA, like the other organizations representing Rural Ontario, has taken to represent the concerns of its members on this issue. If you need more information, we would be pleased to meet with the Board or any interested delegates to provide information on the issue.

While the Province responded within hours to a light rail transit motion by the Toronto Council, there has been no meaningful response to our requests for action on this issue. The issue is tearing Rural Ontario apart and it was out of frustration at the lack of response that the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie, with the support of other municipalities, called in January on the government to respond prior to the annual ROMA/OGRA conference or face a walk out during Premier McGuinty address.

Every now and then in life, there are times when you must stand up and be counted. You must do things that you believe are right for the people you represent. I firmly believe this is one of those times. If the provincial government had done something, we would not be having this discussion. I will be walking for

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those people and their families who are ill from living too close to an Industrial Wind Turbine through no fault of their own. I will be walking for those people who have had to spend months living in motels to get some sleep. I will be walking for those people who have had to sell their homes and sign a gag order to accomplish that, so they can't warn other people.

There are many reasons to walk and very few not to. I hope that other delegates will join me and my colleagues.

Mark Davis,
Deputy Mayor, Arran-Elderslie
Chair, Multi-Municipal Working Group on Wind Turbines