

Testimony from Sharon Wunsch who lives in the Forward Energy wind farm near the Town of Byron in Fond du Lac County Wisconsin, given May 12, 2009 Madison, Wisconsin during the Public Hearing on Turbine Siting Reform.

Dear Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. My husband and I live in a wind farm not by choice; it has been thrust upon us. From our home, we can see at least 80 turbines in our project alone. Standing in our driveway we see three wind farms with over 150 wind turbines visible.

A turbine has been placed 1100 feet from our home. The joy and peacefulness of living in our home has been significantly altered since the placement of these wind turbines. No longer can we sit outside in the evening and enjoy the normal sounds of a peaceful evening, work out of doors, or simply have our windows open in the evening to have fresh air. Noise from the turbines has changed these simple pleasures that we have all taken for granted.

The noise can range from a sound like a jet idling on a runway to a thumping or whooshing sound. A peaceful night's sleep is easily interrupted by the noise. The beautiful view of the countryside we once had is now littered with turbines.

The majority view wind turbines from afar or experience them up close with a drive to the countryside, but they can drive away. They think they are majestic and awesome. They make them feel good because they think they are contributing to the making of renewable energy.

But, unless you live in a wind farm, you cannot possibly understand what we experience day after day or feel the sense of invasion that we feel. I am guessing none of you on this committee live in a wind farm. We are a minority. The sad fact is that they are heavily subsidized by taxpayer money and contribute minimally towards creating energy. If these projects were truly making a difference in energy contribution, we could accept the negative aspect of the wind farms.

In the meantime, wind farms will continue to be built in Wisconsin. I am here today to speak to you from experience. I respectfully request that you consider safe and responsible placement of turbines and setbacks of at least 1/2 mile from residences to reduce subjection to noise and shadow flicker. Given the dramatic change to landscape, property value protection must be considered. We will always be a minority; however our numbers are growing as the mandate for renewable energy drives the construction of more wind farms. Each week we receive calls from other concerned citizens who are in the midst of having a wind farm constructed in their community or near their home. Please listen and consider carefully everything that you are hearing today. It is critical that decisions made in the possible construction of a wind farm in any setting be left at the local level, to the people who know their community and where local government can be held accountable.

Sincerely
Sharon Wunsch
May 12, 2009