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You have heard and read statements both “for” and “against” industrial wind turbines. I will present to you quotations from credible sources which counter often cited positive positions on industrial wind turbines.

First topic: “receptors”

The term “receptors” is used by wind energy developers and government officials to refer to people who have the misfortune to live near industrial wind turbines. My husband and I are potentially going to be victims. All of the people here today to address this issue are potential victims. We are humans, not “receptors”. We have emotions. We have hopes, plans and dreams. We have democratic rights which are being trampled under the Green Energy Act. We are people – perhaps your friends, neighbours or relatives. We are voters and taxpayers. We are victims not “receptors”.

Second topic: health impact

The Chief Medical Officer of Health is often cited by industrial wind turbine proponents. A May 27, 2012 article in the Ottawa Sun and in the May 28th Welland Tribune contains the following: “Although the province’s Chief Medical Officer of Health said there’s no scientific evidence that directly links wind turbine noise and adverse health effects, the AG (Ontario’s Auditor General) acknowledged more research is needed. In recommending the ministry (MOE) provide the public with the results of ‘objective research’ on the potential health effects of wind power, McCarter (the AG) noted the Chief Medical Officer’s report was questioned for being merely a literature review that presented no original research and did not reflect the situation in Ontario.”

Here is a quote directly from the May 2010 Chief Medical Officer of Health’s (CMOH) report:

“Concerns about fairness and equity may also influence attitude towards wind farms and allegations about effects on health. These factors deserve greater attention in future developments.” The farmers who have contracted with NRWC negotiated a flat annual payment of \$50,000 each year for 20 years extendable for the duration of the supply contract. That’s \$50,000 per year to lease 3 acres of farm land and to sign a waiver of nuisance (eg noise). What do neighbouring landowners receive? We share the same “nuisances” plus potential property devaluation and receive nothing. Nothing. Is that fair and equitable? Will this affect our health?

And another quote from the same CMOH’s report: “sound measurements at residential areas around wind turbines...to assess actual ambient noise levels...is a key data gap that could be addressed.”

The Chief Medical Officer of Health and Ontario’s Auditor General are actually in agreement that further “objective” research is needed on health issues related to proximity of industrial wind turbines.

Here are two other quotes regarding health issues and noise from CBC News: “Tomlinson (a MOE field officer) concluded and warned his supervisors that the ministry ‘currently has not approved methodology for field measurement of the noise emissions from multiple (turbines).’ And “Ontario’s

Ministry of the Environment is logging hundreds of health complaints over the province's 900 wind turbines but has downplayed the problem, according to internal documents obtained by CBC News." (CBC Newsreporters Dave Seglins and John Nichol Sept. 2011)

Wind energy proponents assure us that "only 10%" of us will get sick living near industrial wind turbines. Ten per cent is too many! Have the economic impact for the costs of lost productivity due to sick days from work and the additional medical expenditures for the "only 10%" been calculated?

Third topic: Set back allowances

The Ministry of the Environment claims that Ontario's setback allowance of 550m for wind projects is the most stringent in North America. Wolfe and Guttin have compiled a list of 42 examples of North American setbacks greater than Ontario's. These include Halifax, Nova Scotia (1000m to habitable building), Quebec Province (750m to residence or 2km to towns), and Saskatchewan (700m setback).

Examples of American setbacks vary in distances and terms. As a sample, Lenawee County, MI has a 2,000' setback + consent + compensation for loss of property values, while Libertyville, Ill includes 35dBa night noise limit, and Allegheny, NY requires a 2,500' (762m) setback.

The authors also indicate that internationally the Victoria State Government in Australia require that "landowners within 2km have right of veto". According to their survey, Australia has 2,000m setback requirements, UK has recommended 1.6-2.4 km and Denmark is listed as recommending 2,100m (2km) for 3MW IWTs. (The complete documentation is available on the Wind Concerns Ontario website under "topics: setbacks").

We need more distance between industrial wind turbines and rural residents, adjacent towns and cities. The Niagara Region, and some other areas in Southern Ontario, are relatively densely populated. Sixty storey tall industrial electricity generating facilities do not belong in our "backyards". The Ontario government stopped the construction of the two gas fired generation plants in the GTA during the 2011 election campaign. Why did the Ontario government respond to the residents of the GTA and not to its rural residents?

Fourth topic: Reductions in carbon dioxide emissions

The Globe and Mail (May 5, 2012 edition, Report on Business section) printed a 2 page excerpt from Jeff Rubin's book "The End of Growth \*But is that all bad?". Mr. Rubin is a former CIBC World Markets chief economist.

The following are some quotations from Mr. Rubin's book excerpt:

"In the last two decades, Denmark has cut its carbon dioxide emissions by 13 percent. That makes for a remarkable contrast with North American emissions, which have increased by 30 per cent since 1990 ... The credit for reversing greenhouse gas emissions is often given to eco-friendly initiatives like the wind turbines... It's a success story the Danes are literally selling the rest of the world. Denmark, which in 1991 became the first country to set up an offshore wind farm, now garners 11 per cent of its exports

from sales of energy technology. At home, wind power accounts for an impressive 20 per cent of domestic electricity generation.”

“...the other 80 per cent of its power. Coal”. Yes, COAL!

“In Denmark, government-regulated power prices are laden with carbon taxes, which means electricity isn’t cheap, whether its wind powered or coal fired. Not surprisingly, Danes use a fraction of the power that North Americans consume.”

“All those world-famous windmills, it turns out, aren’t behind Denmark’s falling emissions. The real reason for its smaller carbon footprint is its high electricity prices...”.

“Denmark’s track record of environmental success also has a lot to do with cars... Danish car buyers pay a tax ranging from 100 to 180 per cent of the vehicle’s sticker price...”.

“Copenhagen’s trademark windmills act as a smokescreen that obscures a more important takeaway than the mere viability of green energy. The power the Danes use is not much greener than anywhere else. Denmark is green because the Danes have learned to use less power.”

And now you too know Denmark’s “dirty little secret”. The term “dirty little secret” is also a quote from Mr. Rubin’s book excerpt.

Another quote regarding carbon dioxide emissions comes from Britain’s *The Economist*: “Offshore wind, many gigawatts of which the government wants to subsidize, is one of the costliest ways known to man of getting carbon out of the energy system.” (*The Economist*, July 16, 2011 P14)

Fifth topic: property devaluation

The wind energy entrepreneurs and the Ontario government frequently cite a study entitled “Wind Energy Study – Effect on Real Estate Values in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, Ontario” as proof that property values are not impacted measurably or statistically significantly by proximity to industrial wind turbines. This study was funded by CanWEA so, even though its authors use a statistically acceptable methodology, it certainly does not qualify as “independent” scientific research.

The authors of the Study, Canning and Simmons, actually state: “In the study area, where wind farms were clearly visible, there was no empirical evidence to indicate that rural properties realized lower sale prices than similar residential properties within the same area that were outside of the viewshed of a wind turbine.”

Wind energy advocates prefer to ignore “in the study area” even though the authors re-state several times in the report that their conclusions are limited to the rural properties surveyed in Chatham-Kent. Wind energy advocates also ignore the phrase “there was no empirical evidence”. In fact the “mean sale price” for the control group was \$179,403 and for the viewshed group was \$166,815, a price differential in the raw data.

When the authors applied an error factor of plus or minus 10% to these dollar figures, then there was, as they stated, “no empirical evidence” of lower sale prices because, using the plus 10% error factor applied to the raw data, there was no price differential. However, using the -10% error factor, the equally correct conclusion is that there was about a 20% price reduction.

The authors also state that further studies are required to determine if noise and length of time the property was for sale will influence price. They did not include abandoned or unsold rural properties that linger on the market.

Canning and Simmons state that “differences (in price) may arise due to variations in: socio-economic influences, wind directions, tower heights, jurisdictional set back requirements, tree lines and bush lots”, etc. In March, 2012 there were 17 current MLS listings of small rural properties in West Lincoln priced at between \$350,000 and \$1M (\$998,900, \$924,900, \$769,000, \$898,900, \$699,900, \$698,900, \$594,800, \$519,900, \$479,000, \$444,000, \$412,000, \$399,900, \$398,000, \$389,900, \$384,000, \$359,900, and \$359,000). In a telephone conversation with my husband, Mr. Canning said that he thought property purchasers in a higher price point would be more “discerning”. Comparing the potential sale price of rural properties in West Lincoln which were listed on the market in the \$350,000 to \$1m range to properties in Chatham-Kent which sold between \$160,000-\$180,000 is, in our opinion, ludicrous.

The Chatham-Kent report urges several times that “caution should be used before suggesting that similar results would be found in other areas.” It includes numerous disclaimers and recommendations for further studies. A provincial conclusion cannot be extrapolated from a single site survey and statistical analysis of 40 samples. And yet NRWC continues to assure us that based on this study there will be no market devaluation for properties in West Lincoln.

We believe, and many independent studies confirm, that there is a significant reduction in the value of the largest single asset in our retirement portfolio. CBC News says “The CBC has documented scores of families who’ve discovered their property values are not only going downward, but also some who are unable to sell and have even abandoned their homes because of concerns of nearby turbines affecting their health.” (CBC reporters Dave Seglin and John Nichol – Oct. 2011)

In summation, another quote. This one is from the Environmental Review Tribunal in Chatham. Environment Ministry lawyer Frederika Rotter said: “we will see in the course of this hearing that lots of people are worried about windmills. They may not like the noise, they may think the noise makes them sick, but really what makes them sick is just the windmills being on the land because it does impact on their property values.” (CBC News).

We agree.

Conclusion:

In my more optimistic moments, which are rare, I believe that the McGuinty Government is now on the defensive and, while refusing to budge from justifying their contractual obligations and legislative

blunders, is struggling to find public justification for this financial fiasco. Based on increasing media coverage of opposition, their support for industrial wind turbines is being eroded.

Please join Ontario's 79 rural municipalities in asking for a moratorium. Please join the Ontario Auditor General, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the authors of the Kent-Chatham real estate study, and many, many more including, recently, David Suzuki in asking for objective, scientific research before more industrial wind turbines are built.

In Feb. 2011, the Ontario government placed a ban on offshore wind energy projects pending further scientific studies and proposed an increased setback of 5km from shore. (Globe & Mail, Oct 17, 2011)  
Why is the government reluctant to do the same for land-based wind energy projects?

Niagara Region and the other rural municipalities across Ontario can help persuade the McGuinty Government to do the right thing.

We, individually and collectively, are fighting for our health, our homes and our future. We are asking for a moratorium and independent scientific research. We need help from our elected representatives both municipally and regionally. Please help us.