

Members of the Interim Energy, Environment and Technology Committee:

After reading the public comments, frankly I'm shocked by the number of folks that blindly believe in the wind energy myth or that would submit a form letter. This has to be the major con of the last two decades hoisted upon an unsuspecting public by misguided environmentalists in combination with greedy capitalists (subsidy parasites). There is nothing wrong with our free market system, it's crony capitalism that I object to. Due to the intermittent nature of wind, it requires costly back up generation from traditional sources--coal and natural gas. Because our electric grid can not store electricity, power generation must take place on a demand basis. When the wind doesn't blow, natural gas and coal generation must fill in. Those generating plants and capacity aren't cheap. More and bigger ones have to be built creating a very expensive redundancy. Who pays? You do on your electric bill. The integration costs are immense. As a Rocky Mountain Power customer, I'm about to get another 7.5% rate hike January 1st if the inequitable negotiated settlement is approved. This comes on the heels of a 7.2% rate hike April 1st and a 7% rate hike December 28, 2010--three rate hikes in about 12 months! The April 1st rate hike was an Energy Cost Adjustment, Rocky Mountain Power made the claim that it was less because of wind. Dang, according to their other two price hike proposals, the cost of wind integration are major factors in my higher electric bills.

It is impossible to convince committed environmentalists that they've been had by the wind industry. They worship the wind and have no interest in the cold hard facts in the matter such as there is little to no environmental benefit. The key is to out vote them as you do in Idaho. They may have the support of the newspapers but the print media is dying. Nationally, the GOP majority in the US House of Representatives get it. In the US Senate, not so much. As an example, Senator Crapo believes in the benefits of renewable energy. This is unfortunate but the good news is that all the viable candidates for the GOP nomination are on to the wind myth. Nationally, conservatives have figured it out, Idaho is a tad behind the times shall we say.

Thanks to INL, Idaho is the leader in nuclear innovation. Sadly, application is the biggest issue. **The 2012 Idaho Energy Plan should emphasis promoting and educating the energy independence benefit of nuclear and its long term solution to our nation's clean energy needs.** On the issue of energy independence, the internationally respected periodical, The Economist, recently reported that the USA is 75% energy independent. Thanks to horizontal drilling, also known as hydraulic fracturing or fracking for short, our national estimate for natural gas reserves grew by almost 40% in 2008. This process has now been perfected for oil extraction as well. Depending on who is elected come 2012, we may be energy independent sooner than later. Environmentalists, Liberals, Socialists, Malthusians, Nihilists and others of their ilk will be fighting this hard. The facts don't support them, oil and natural gas are extracted thousands of feet below the water table but that won't stop them. They possess the fanaticism of zealots and a marked disdain for "American Exceptional-ism". Too bad, we are indeed that shining City on a hill. So it was terrific news to read about the Western Idaho Basin Gas Sands. Please encourage their development as much as you can in your plan. Lots of my neighbors have departed for work in the Bakken Field in North Dakota, I'd rather they could stay in Idaho and I'll bet their families would too.

The concern regarding low income folks is real, the problem is that we have not pursued cost

effective solutions that would expand supply and lower costs. Raising rates on those believed to be well off to subsidize the poor is not the proper solution. Penalizing the folks that pay their bills is a solution that is being roundly rejected in today's political arena and for good reason. Folks that want a European styled social democracy need to live in one for awhile like I have.

The solution to the wind energy myth and the defeat of nihilistic environmentalists that are being suckered by wind developers and their lobby may ultimately be the ballot box. Here in eastern Idaho, voters seem to favor their former bishops and stake presidents. There is not always a correlation between a good spiritual leader and a good political one. Also, growing up in Tetonia, I understand agri-business and who runs the state. We were at the end of the irrigation ditch and had the same water shares as those above but didn't do all that well on low water years - if you get my drift. Any way, to the dismay of IPUC staff I'm doing my best to educate my neighbors on the impact of wind on their electric bills. Hit them hard enough in the pocket book and they might start voting the ones out that aren't looking out for them. A target rich environment if you ask me.

Bruce R. Baxter  
Energy Investor

7 N 3192 E  
Idaho Falls, ID 83401  
(208) 403-8242