

My Testimony 6/5/09

Morning Sir,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Jim Miller, I am a lifelong resident of ND. I have worked most of my life farming the land and in the designing and manufacturing of agricultural equipment. I have been known throughout the state as a self employed ag equipment engineer and inventor. For the last nine years, my wife Mary Ann and I have built a new business of manufacturing professional sled dog racing equipment that is used on the Iditarod Trail and known worldwide.

About five years ago, Mary Ann and I purchased an unoccupied farmstead on 33 acres of land. One year later, with the help of our three sons, we settled the land, moved our house in and built a new manufacturing facility for our business. We have become members of the community, our local church and patronize the local businesses. We have built a life for ourselves here in Griggs County.

We were first introduced to the plans of a wind farm near us by a group called M-Power LLC and this new company and the development would be controlled by the local residents. A few months ago when I noticed surveyors working near our property I realized they were making plans for the construction of three wind turbines approximately ¼ mile from our house. This was a different plan than I had known of and clearly the planners were not considering what this will do to us residents. **It has been widely studied and concluded that these tower setbacks should be one to one and half miles from occupied residences.**

Having been to some of the meetings, I had heard all of the good things about these turbines but there was no mention of locating these giants close to anyone's home. I assumed no one would ever do that. **To me it makes good common sense not to.** I have learned that wind developers are doing this all over the country and will never talk about any of the negative aspects of it. Now I have become well educated on this and have experienced the noise they emit, felt the low decible effects and know what it will be like to live close to these towers. When I started speaking with other people that are currently living with these machines this close, it is quite clear to understand that it can be miserable and unhealthy. I am prepared to back up my statements with proof that **these turbines produce noise pollution, health risks, industrial electrical pollution, annoying blade shadow flicker, ice throw and reduced property and land values.**

**I am requesting the turbine locations be set back a minimum of one mile from our home and business located at 720 119<sup>th</sup> AV SE Luverne, ND.** I am also insisting that us residents that **oppose the construction plan** of this project be given a fair land value protection plan should we ever need to sell our property. We have an extensive amount of investment in our homes and any ability to regain the invested value will be stripped away from us should these turbines be placed so close. Even your own board member agrees that if this project is constructed in this manor, **it is going to devalue our property.**

To put the physical aspect of these turbines into better perspective, imagine three 400' structures with rotating blades behind your house and outside your living room window. It is well known and documented that ice throw from these large blades can travel at least 1700 feet. In our cold climate it could be farther, and ice build-up on any object that is in the elements occurs several times each winter. It is also known and proven that should a turbine become damaged by the elements during operation and destroy itself, the parts could be thrown as much as a one half mile (2640'). Furthermore, can these turbines withstand straightline winds estimated of 120 mph such as we recently experienced here in 2006 when it blew the train off the high bridge? Remember? This was only 3 years ago. These towers are engineered to withstand only 100 mph winds.

Think about what would happen when a wind like that comes up fast while the turbine is operating. I have experienced these winds myself and know that with all the momentum in the rotating turbine and blades, it is not possible to stop the machine quick enough. When such an event occurs, (and it is very likely to) if a turbine is damaged, a blade may be separated and hurled right into my home.

Remember now, the developers want these turbines to be there for 99 years so this scenario has the potential to occur each year. Do you believe that ¼ mile away from a home is far enough away? I don't. How many other homes in the proposed project or existing projects are in danger of this event? And how many people are willing to step forward and say so? Anyone that has been around mechanical equipment such as I have knows that wear and fatigue will become an issue at some point and will create excess noise and mechanical failure. It is foolish to think that these 400' tall structures will be safe any less than one mile from a home. At least one of the turbine manufacturers states that maintenance personnel should not be closer than 1300' from a moving turbine of 1.5 MW capacity.

Our country is on a mission to be more dependent on clean energy. Now you make it dirty by forcing it on the local residents like this and I would never have imagined that the state of ND and the Public Service Commission would ever allow it. There are many vast and open spaces here in ND with good wind and these developers should not be allowed to stuff these turbine projects down the throat of the residents.

Some wind farm developers respect the residents and landowners by negotiating their contracts and locating the towers far from homes and occupied areas and allowing farm practices to continue uninterrupted. On the topic of wind development, Senator Byron Dorgan stated last week on the radio that "we live off of our ancestors work" and "we want to make good things happen in this state". "If this would hurt any landowners, I wouldn't be for it".

**Keeping our farm fields productive and our homes healthy is living off our ancestors work. Constructing wind turbines near homes and in the middle of all the good fertile farm land is destroying their work.**

When I first learned of this proposed turbine construction plan and what it is targeted to accomplish, I called my youngest son Sergeant Adam J. Miller, US marine Corp, who has served in Iraq and serves as supervisor stationed at MC Air Station, Yuma, AZ, and talked to him about his plans to return home after his service and enter into the ag aerial spraying business. I mentioned to him that if these wind farm developers are allowed to continue to litter our state with turbines in an irresponsible manor, his future plans may be in jeopardy. For every wind farm that goes up in agricultural areas in this manor, the population, the farm land, and every business that is related to it is going to suffer depletion. Is this what you consider good for our state?

Both of our fathers fought in the Battle of the Bulge in WWII, so we **all** could have freedom here at home. This is clearly a taking of our freedom.

**Gentlemen of the Public Service Commission, you must stop this irresponsible siting of wind turbines.**

James R. Miller, Luverne ND

I want my statement to be made a part of the record and here is a copy. Here also are the documents to back up my statements.

References:

Documents on health and safety submitted by hand.

Setback videos: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QL-cRuYAxg0&feature=related>

Shadow flicker/strobing: <http://betterplan.squarespace.com/harding-epilepsy-and-wind-turb/>

Turbine noise: <http://betterplan.squarespace.com/alberts-primer-for-addressing/>

Reduced property value: <http://betterplan.squarespace.com/tazewell-county-il-property-va/>

Health issues: <http://betterplan.squarespace.com/known-health-and-safety-issues/>