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December 18, 2018

Mr. Michael Kerr
Greater Johnstown Water Authority
640 Franklin Street
Johnstown, PA 15905

Dear Mr. Kerr:

I'm writing today to formally request that the authority end its lease agreement with Competitive Power Ventures to construct wind turbines in Upper Yoder Township. I am also asking that the authority, through its legal counsel, go back to court and restore the North Fork and Dalton Run Watershed deed restrictions to where they stood before the recent hearing in Cambria County Court.

It should come as no surprise to the board that I oppose this project on numerous fronts. First and foremost, I represent my constituents. While some on the board may be quick to dismiss their concerns as nothing more than a "not-in-my-backyard" philosophy, I believe these residents have legitimate reservations about the long-term impact of this hastily approved deal. This is not political grandstanding, but rather standing up for those I represent. I have a duty to represent my constituents and they are outraged.

I believe it is also my duty to protect our area's precious natural resources. The land on and around which these turbines could be built is prime ground for hunting, hiking, biking and all sorts of other outdoor recreation. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources reports that more than 94,000 people enjoy nearby Laurel Ridge State Park annually. With tourism such a vital piece of Cambria County's economy, we cannot simply assume that this project won't impact thousands of people who use and enjoy our pristine parks.

My opposition to the Laurel Ridge windmill project includes, but is not limited to, the following reasons:

- 1) Negative impact on our water.
- 2) Negative impact on our tourism industry.
- 3) Negative impact on hunters.
- 4) Negative impact on wildlife.
- 5) Negative impact on local homeowners who will have to live close to these windmills.

- 6) The process by which the windmills were disclosed to the general public. (This should have been highly publicized before any action was taken.)
- 7) The limited financial return received by the Greater Johnstown Water Authority.
- 8) Lack of a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) process for this contract.
- 9) Lack of formal notification given to Upper Yoder Township officials beyond your lawyer calling their lawyer.
- 10) Forest fragmentation.
- 11) Run-off problems for residents in the valley.
- 12) The court hearing appearing to be one-sided. Those in opposition did not have time to secure expert water and environmental testimony.
- 13) Increased water rates to customers due to costly pending litigation opposing this windmill project, which could total millions of dollars in legal fees for the authority and community groups. I am concerned that the legal costs – ultimately borne by ratepayers – could bankrupt our community and the water authority.
- 14) Safety concerns because of a large natural gas line being located extremely close to where blasting for turbine foundations would occur.

In a recent online poll conducted by the Tribune-Democrat, it is abundantly clear that people do not want these windmills. The Greater Johnstown Water Authority board members cannot be tone deaf to this opposition.

I know that emotions ran high during both my town hall and your special board meeting last week. There are many local issues in need of a resolution, but I believe that if we work together, we can channel the passion and energy of the community into finding solutions to many of the issues we face.

Just because we are at opposite sides of the windmill issue does not mean I will not assist with looking for these additional dollars. Note that I continue to assist CPV with issues regarding regulatory permits with the Cambria-Somerset Authority.

If you need my assistance in approaching CPV regarding termination of the lease agreement with the authority, I will assist with that as well. I have taken the liberty of copying CPV on this correspondence. I think CPV recognizes that the people do not want this.

It is clear that the Laurel Ridge is something that people in our area take great pride in and I know your change of heart would be greatly appreciated by everyone.

Sincerely,



Frank Burns
State Representative
72nd Legislative District

Cc: Michael Kerr, authority manager

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