



For a thriving New England

CLF New Hampshire 27 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301
P: 603.225.3060
F: 603.225.3059
www.clf.org

February 18, 2013

The Honorable David Borden, Chairman
House Science, Technology, and Energy Committee
Room 304
Legislative Office Building
Concord, NH 03301

Re: House Bill 580

Dear Chairman Borden and Members of the Committee:

I write on behalf of Conservation Law Foundation, a nonprofit, member-supported organization that works to solve the environmental problems threatening the people, natural resources, and communities of New England. CLF opposes House Bill 580, insofar as the legislation seeks to impose a moratorium on wind energy projects in the state of New Hampshire pending the completion of a state energy plan.

In the wake of increasingly frequent severe weather events and rising temperatures, the economic, environmental, and societal impacts of climate change are undeniable and must be addressed through aggressive efforts to reduce the emissions causing climate change, including reductions in reliance on fossil fuels. New Hampshire has adopted a number of important initiatives to achieve these goals, such as utility energy efficiency programs, the renewable portfolio standard statute, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and the state's Climate Action Plan. Land-based wind energy is recognized under both the renewable portfolio standard statute and the Climate Action Plan as an important clean energy source and is already playing a vital role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the electric sector.

The need for significant new wind energy deployment, as a renewable resource that can deliver thousands of megawatts of clean, cost-effective electricity to New England customers, is compelling. As we face the increasingly dire consequences of climate change, CLF believes that deployment of appropriately sited wind projects—along with the full suite of energy efficiency and renewable energy strategies—should continue without delay. A moratorium on wind energy projects would contradict the state's well-established clean energy policies and would disrupt and delay needed progress in their implementation.

For the reasons discussed in the joint testimony of CLF and other organizations to the Committee, dated February 11, 2013, regarding several bills addressing energy project siting, the Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) process is in need of improvements in numerous respects. CLF welcomes and supports any effort by the Committee to advance appropriate reforms to the SEC enabling statute during the current legislative session. On a separate track, the SEC should immediately pursue the development and adoption of appropriate siting guidelines and environmentally protective siting criteria for wind energy and other energy projects.



Notwithstanding the ample room for improvement in the SEC process and the importance of sound siting guidelines, it would be misguided to put on hold an entire category of renewable energy projects that enjoy strong state policy support and that provide meaningful environmental and economic benefits to the state. To the extent that House Bill 580 would do so, CLF encourages the Committee to recommend that House Bill 580 be voted inexpedient to legislate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christophe Courchesne", written in a cursive style.

Christophe Courchesne
Staff Attorney