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Dear New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers:

As you gather for your invitation-only, 37th Annual Conference in La Malbaie this weekend, we, the undersigned groups, individuals and victims, appeal to you to take clear, compelling, and compassionate steps to solve the problems you have created by supporting the deployment of “big wind” in our region.

These generation projects create serious, often intractable problems. Those of us who have been forced to live near utility-scale wind projects you have promoted, and the individuals and groups we are working with, have learned through direct experience the consequences of these projects which include:

- **Stressing grid interconnections and transmission lines**

New England’s Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) obligations for 2010 were about 14% of demand – an amount satisfied through a combination of existing, qualified resources in New England and renewable energy imported from neighboring New York and Canada. These percentages are slated to reach over 20% by 2020 with most of the energy coming from projects not yet built. Since wind energy is the primary resource proposed to be built in the region, and the resource most favored by you, future RPS obligations will likely be met through the deployment of thousands of new turbines.

The ISO-NE’s [New England Wind Integration Study](#) (NEWIS), published in December 2010 made clear that many favorable sites for wind development are remote from New England’s load centers and that development of these distant sites would require significant transmission development. According to NEWIS, developing 20% wind in New England would require 4,095 miles of new lines at an estimated cost of between \$11 and \$15 billion. Regulatory agencies have had full knowledge of the transmission constraints and costs since 2010 and yet you have made no attempt to address this issue through policy changes or course corrections. In 2013, the public is only now becoming aware that deployment of utility-scale wind generation is stressing the region’s grid, and making the management of generation sources more difficult.

- **Damaging public health**

As the number of complaints about health impacts from turbine noise increases, the refusal of wind developers to acknowledge any connection between the operation of their turbines and negative public health impacts has become more and more outrageous. Neighbors are being ignored by state health officials, and are forced to

file nuisance lawsuits against developers and operators. Many residents of our region are suffering from headaches, nausea, sleep disruption, depression, and other serious health problems. Some are being forced to abandon their homes.

We are glad to see that the Massachusetts legislature is considering a bill that would require an epidemiological study of health impacts from turbines, and that Governor Patrick has indicated he will sign it. But this is really too little, too late for all the families already suffering. We need a respectful, honest dialogue that treats neighbors' complaints at face value and begins an open discussion of how to restore to them the quality of life that they have lost. Ignoring them will not make this problem go away. Building more wind turbines will create more victims.

- **Damaging already-threatened habitat and natural resources**

Most utility-scale wind projects in our region are proposed for mountain ridges. Development of any type on ecologically sensitive ridgelines that are critical for climate change adaptation is extremely short-sighted. Wind turbines are being constructed in core wildlife habitat that is being fragmented and disconnected. Our highest quality water resources, headwater streams and wetlands are being degraded. Bird and bat populations, already stressed by disease and habitat destruction, are threatened by wind turbines on our mountains.

- **Damage to tourism and second home economy**

Our region's economy is deeply dependent on our unspoiled natural beauty, our mountains and coastal terrains, peaceful environments where people come to escape from cities and industry. Some of the quietest places on earth are being exposed to industrial wind turbine noise, and some of the most beautiful areas in the region are now sporting blinking red lights that form ribbons of streaming red lines at night.

- **Driving up the cost of electricity**

Adding large amounts of wind to the region's fuel mix may reduce marginal electricity prices since wind has no fuel cost, but the costs passed on to ratepayers are derived from power purchase agreements negotiated between utilities and wind plant owners. Onshore wind currently costs between 9 and 11 cents per KWh, more than twice the wholesale price of natural gas. Offshore wind is even more expensive at over 20 cents a KWh. More wind in the fuel mix will cause upward pressure on energy prices for the life of the power purchase agreements. Other significant integration costs will also be imposed on the region to accommodate wind's intermittency, including billions of dollars in new generation and transmission costs.

- **Increasing (not decreasing) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions**

ISO-NE's 2013 Regional Electricity Outlook acknowledges the need for a new fleet of flexible, efficient ramping generators if we continue a policy that promotes increasing quantities of intermittent resources. The cost of this new infrastructure has not been evaluated. Without flex generators, New England's current fleet of natural gas generators are called upon to ramp inefficiently in response to intermittent resources like wind. As a result, our current fuel and generator mix may be increasing GHG emissions while not meaningfully reducing fossil fuel consumption. Adding more wind will make the problem worse.

- **Lack of coordinated response**

In your Resolution 205 and other recent resolutions, you have called for coordination in the development of the region's renewable energy sources, particularly wind and solar. Massachusetts and Connecticut were the first to respond. Massachusetts now mandates that 7% of RPS Class I compliance be met using long-term (15-20 year) power contracts. Changes to Connecticut's RPS force 4% of the state's RPS load to be satisfied with contracts.

Since Massachusetts and Connecticut represent nearly 75% of the region's total RPS load, the effect of these changes on the region's renewable energy mix will be significant. Meeting these obligations will place significant pressure on northern New England and Canadian communities. Unfortunately, there is no Resolution pledging a coordinated response by the Conference to the negative impacts that come with the development of these sources. The problems are complex, and often beyond the expertise of any one state or province.

We urge you to pass a companion resolution that calls for the regulatory and public health entities in the region's states and provinces to work together to strengthen and expand the responses to the very real challenges outlined in this letter.

Until these problems are solved, it would be irresponsible for the Conference to continue to support even more utility-scale wind projects in our region.

Time will not solve these problems – neither the problems, nor any of us, are going away. The problems are happening now – this is not a planning or policy debate, but about events needing a response.

The positions taken by the Conference matter – state legislatures, regulators, and developers are all influenced by the messages that come out of your meetings. Please use that power to take responsible action in responding to the problems created by your advocacy.

Revise or withdraw your plans that support the expansion of wind and a wind build out in rural areas to support the urban areas. Start evaluating and fixing the problems that have been created by your policies.

We look forward to hearing your reply. Please see the attached letter for the signatories.