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Comments on SEC Rulemaking Notice

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The meteorology and topography of NH is special. It has no wide open areas like "out west" where the wind just blows over flat, treeless, expanses. New Hampshire has many isolated hills and ridges, and with lots of wind blowing over their tops. So the question is not whether NH has available wind power. Rather it's a question of whether we want to tap this resource in a meaningful way. Each turbine generates about 3 Megawatts maximum, but only about 1 Megawatt on average. This means that if we want to generate meaningful amounts of wind-blown electricity, we need to install about 1000 turbines, in wind farms on top of some hundred hills and ridges, scattered over our state. 1000 turbines require sites on MOST of our hills and ridges, with these enormous structures viewable from almost every main road, and forming the "main attraction" for our hikers and climbers. The logic for wind farms is to reduce carbon emissions, so a few serve no enunciated public purpose. Putting up just a few means little reduction, and there are easier, and cheaper, ways to do that. Those who sincerely want to use wind power to make a meaningful contribution to reducing our CO2 emissions need to make the case for "covering" NH with them, not by single (SEC) site decisions. And since they will be visible from most everywhere, they must necessarily be willing to convert the Granite state into the Windmill state!

There is no logic in the SEC approving wind farms on a one-by-one basis. The SEC should not consider approving even ONE site on an isolated ridge or hill unless it is willing to cover most of them. The SEC should not begin hearings on ANY particular wind farm proposal until they decide (through a public hearing) whether NH wants a thousand turbines covering most of its hills and ridges. Such a preliminary hearing will require both proponents and opponents to face up to the real question of wind power in NH.

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