

Closing by Bill Rau

**Invenergy Wind Farm Closing Statement, 1 Nov 2016:  
Presentation to the McLean County Zoning Board**

Mister Chairman and Members of the Board:

Let me start with a quote.

**“Of all the forces of nature, I should think the wind contains the largest amount of motive power. . . . Take any given space of the earth’s surface . . . and all the power exerted by all the men, beasts, running-water, and steam, over and upon it, shall NOT equal the one hundredth part of what is exerted by the blowing of the wind over and upon the same space.” [However] . . . “no . . . successful mode of controlling and directing the wind has been discovered. . . . As yet, the wind is an untamed and unharnessed force; and quite possibly one of the greatest discoveries, hereafter to be made, will be the taming and harnessing of the wind.”**

**(<http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/discoveries.htm>)**

Thus spoke Abraham Lincoln to the Young Men's Association of Bloomington, April 6, 1858.

We now “control and direct the wind”; Invenergy wants to harness more of it.

And Lincoln? Were he alive, he would testify on behalf of this wind farm. He would do so, NOT only because of its benefits, but also because of its numerous Beneficial Negations. *What a wind farm **does NOT do** may be more important than what it does do.*

### **Beneficial Negations**

A wind farm does NOT require an expensive and fallible phalanx of guards to keep it out of the hands of terrorists who could then obliterate a vast stretch of Illinois rendering that land unfit for either beast or human for 4 times 4 score years.

It does NOT vent radioactive gases into the morning’s dark hours; it does NOT increase cancer rates downwind of the farm.

It does NOT lay claim to the water of lakes and rivers when we will face drought as we approach mid-century. It does NOT suffer from declining production—even a halt to production—when heat waves make “cooling” water too hot. ***Wind farms do NOT need water to produce power.***

A wind farm NEVER strip-mined once magnificent parts of the Illinois Shawnee Hills—now reduced to barren wastelands incapable of return to their glory as one of God’s gifts to our country.

Wind farms do NOT cause asthma, bronchitis, or heart attacks; they do NOT shorten life expectancy. Wind farm workers NEVER get black lung disease; they are NEVER incinerated by a wind-farm fire.

An Illinois wind farm has NEVER poisoned our big game fish with mercury; they have NEVER poisoned a county’s water supply; they NEVER create huge and dangerous piles of wind ash or wind slurry.

Finally, and most importantly, wind farms do NOT threaten our grandchildren's survival. They do NOT release mind-boggling quantities of carbon dioxide thereby forcing the earth's climate to spin out of control. On the contrary, they are one of the solutions to slowing, and eventually stopping, the relentless degradation of the Earth's climate and ecosystem.

Let's consider an **UN-beneficial** outcome. **Commercial wind farms do NOT create tangible, direct returns to the vast majority of county residents.** When Zilka built our first wind farm, my friends were enthusiastic supporters. Disappointment set in when we discovered that we could NOT buy even a single kilowatt hour of Made in McLean wind power. The farm's total output would be shipped north.

Approval of many wind farms today rests on the *passive altruism of a county's silent majority*, an unstable situation that can be undone by a *passionate, organized, anti-wind minority*.

Let's change this for the good.

### **Building a Better Wind Farm**

Invenergy can build a better wind farm with two actions. First, offer power purchase agreements to local residents, businesses, hospitals, schools, and government entities who want to buy Made in McLean wind power. Second, offer bonds to McLean County residents who would like to invest in the construction of the farm.

What would grow out of this **Better Neighbor Compact**?

Residents driving by the farm could say, "Those turbines ahead: they power my home and this car." Or, "See over there; that's MY windfarm. I bought bonds to finance it." The strength of community commitment just might rise to match the strong McLean County winds that imprinted Lincoln's imagination when he rode the 8<sup>th</sup> judicial circuit in the 1850s.

Regardless of the fate of a *Better Neighbor Compact*, I hope you will vote as Lincoln would: an Affirmative Yea for changes in wind-farm zoning that allow Invenergy's wind farm to go forward.

Ladies. Gentlemen. **Let's harness the wind!**

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