

Support Clean Energy and Invest in Rural Montana

Vote Yes on SB 415



Montana's renewable energy potential is vast and untapped. Montana has one of the best wind resources in the nation, yet we continue to invest in energy sources that pollute our air and water, harm public health, and place energy consumers at risk.

Pollutants from the burning of coal, such as carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury contribute to serious health problems, global climate change, smog, and acid rain. Furthermore, our reliance on fossil fuels leaves us vulnerable to future price volatility.

SB 415 would create a Renewable Energy Standard (RES) to encourage the development of Montana's wind resource, diversify our energy supply, and promote investment in rural Montana. Seventeen other states have already passed similar legislation.

MONTANA'S VAST, UNTAPPED WIND RESOURCE

Wind Potential in billions of kWh

1	North Dakota	1,210
2	Texas	1,190
3	Kansas	1,070
4	South Dakota	1,030
5	Montana	1,020
6	Nebraska	868
7	Wyoming	747
8	Oklahoma	725
9	Minnesota	657
10	Iowa	551

Developed Wind in MW

1	California	2,043
2	Texas	1,293
3	Minnesota	563
4	Iowa	471
5	Wyoming	285
6	Oregon	259
7	Washington	244
8	Colorado	223
9	New Mexico	207
27	Montana	<1

American Wind Energy Association <http://www.awea.org/pubs/factsheets.html>

Montana's wind resources could provide enough power for the entire state more than 70 times over. Montana ranks 5th as measured by annual energy potential in billions of kWh, factoring in environmental and land use exclusions. Unfortunately, Montana has developed less than 1 MW of that vast potential, and ranks 27th for developed wind capacity.

WINDFALL FOR MONTANA FARMERS

Wind energy development has the potential to revitalize our rural communities. **Farmers and ranchers are typically paid \$2500 to \$5000 annually per wind turbine** for leases on good wind sites. Farmers can still raise crops on the land and ranchers can still graze their cattle right up to the base of the towers. As Leroy Ratzlaff, a third generation landowner and farmer in Hyde County, S.D., said, "It's almost like renting out my farm and still having it. And the cows don't seem to mind a bit." (U.S. Dept. of Energy, *Wind Energy and Economic Development*)

WIND POWER IS CHEAP POWER

- The cost of wind has dropped 80% in the last twenty years (U.S. DOE), and should continue to decrease as the wind industry grows.
- The U.S. DOE projects the cost of coal power to be 4-5.5 cents per kWh in 2010, compared to 3.5 cents for wind.
- Diversifying our energy sources will promote competition among electricity suppliers driving down overall electricity prices.
- Additionally, wind power can have the secondary effect of decreasing demand for natural gas used in electric generation, thus driving down the price of natural gas used for heating homes.