

Chair Dianne Feinstein
S-128 Capitol
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chair Marcy Kaptur
2362-B Rayburn HOB
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member John Kennedy
S-128 Capitol
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Ranking Member Mike Simpson
2362-B Rayburn HOB
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 8, 2021

Subject: FY 2022 Appropriations for Distributed Wind

Dear Chair Kaptur, Ranking Member Simpson, Chair Feinstein and Ranking Member Kennedy:

On behalf of the Distributed Wind Energy Association, and the partners signed below, we urge your continued support for distributed wind power in the fiscal year 2022 appropriations process; and ask that you fund the program proportionally to its potential benefits for domestic economic growth and the environment.

Many energy experts have been surprised to discover that onshore distributed wind has the potential to produce as much as four times the amount of total electricity consumed in the US¹, completely carbon free.

The potential is similar to offshore wind electricity production, is complementary to it and has numerous benefits. While all types of energy systems create jobs and profits, as the name implies, the benefits of distributed wind are spread broadly across the landscape and the economic spectrum. Distributed wind energy:

Many energy experts have been surprised to discover that onshore distributed wind¹ has the potential to produce as much as four times the amount of total electricity consumed in the US, ... about equal to... offshore wind.

- creates economic mobility and offers training and job opportunities both in growing work-from-home communities and hard-hit rural areas in need of well-paying jobs, especially those communities impacted by the energy transition:
 - distributed wind can help with displaced energy workers throughout the country, including Appalachia, the Midwest and in Western states;
- supports local small and medium-size manufacturers;
- supports small and medium-size installation and service businesses, keeping money and jobs in the local communities;
- encourages energy self-sufficiency for farmers, ranchers and small to medium businesses by:
 - lowering costs;
 - creating new income streams; and
- can cut building energy demand through on-site installations in rural, industrial, and populated areas, helping meet the goal of lowering the carbon intensity of buildings 50% by 2035.

Distributed wind turbines dot the American landscape, from farms to factories, homes, wildlife refuges, breweries, wineries, ski resorts, and schools. American made turbines are found in well over 100 countries as well. And yet this is still a nascent clean energy technology ripe for growth.

¹ National Renewable Energy Laboratory; Technical Report NREL/TP-6A20-67337 November 2016; Eric Lantz, Benjamin Sigrin, Michael Gleason, Robert Preus, and Ian Baring-Gould as “behind the meter” applications, where the installation is on site.

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) estimates distributed wind power could reach another 49 million sites in the U.S. alone. Notably, distributed wind power works well with solar, as well as other distributed generation applications, including those systems designed to add resilience for wildfires and other natural disasters, especially at military bases, first responder facilities and remote communities.

“US based small wind manufacturers still account for most US small wind sales, but the 76% market share represents a substantial decline from 94% in 2017, 98% in 2016, and the nearly 100% reported in 2015.”²

– 2018 Distributed Wind Market Report

Yet US distributed wind manufacturing and installations, especially small wind projects, are losing ground: A PNNL report for EERE noted that the number of manufacturers reporting sales in 2018 was down substantially, and even more troubling, US based small wind manufacturers still account for most US small wind sales, but the 76% market share represents a substantial decline from 94% in 2017, 98% in 2016, and the nearly 100% reported in 2015.”²

The same report noted that US shares of foreign markets declined by almost 60% from 2017 to 2018. The EU, China and other countries are continuing to support their wind energy companies with R&D and other assistance.

While the cost of distributed wind has come down, the costs have not come down as fast as the bigger turbines. Offshore has comparable costs and potential to distributed wind, though distributed wind has historically received only one-third to one-fifth of the research, development and demonstration funding. Federal investment is the key.

Distributed wind energy can help reach the ambitious goal of a carbon-free grid by 2035. With additional research and development, as well as deployment assistance, distributed wind can make an enormous contribution to America’s energy future and economic recovery.

Increasing deployment has helped manufacturers of other energy technologies, notably solar and batteries, cut costs substantially. NREL estimated that high deployment could cut costs another 60%, making behind-the-meter applications competitive for over 100 million Americans. Remaining work includes improving operating efficiency and on-line hours: small distributed wind turbine capacity factors are about 60% that of big turbines. Other work includes optimizing technology for grid-connected, microgrid and off-grid market segments, expanding competitive improvement grants to manufacturers, reducing costs for both wind turbines and installations, addressing numerous “soft costs,” and expanding partnerships with key stakeholders; the effort required is real and substantial.

We’d urge a line item for distributed wind power this year once again, at no less than \$30 million, and reaching levels approximating offshore wind investment. Our many small businesses, manufacturers, vendors, customers, farmers, rely heavily on this funding to help bolster American jobs and manufacturing, increase farm and rural income, provide homeowners and others energy choice, improve energy security and protect the environment.

Again, we urge you to maintain, and grow support, with clear directive language, for America’s distributed wind power community. We greatly appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you in the days ahead.

Sincerely,

² PNNL for the Department of Energy, 2018 Distributed Wind Market Report, <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2019/08/f65/2018%20Distributed%20Wind%20Market%20Report.pdf>, p.8



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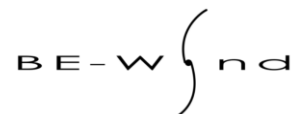
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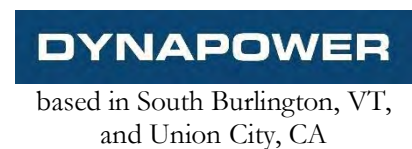
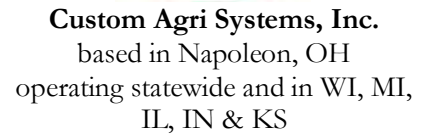
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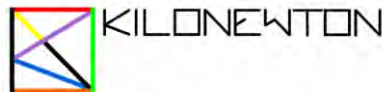
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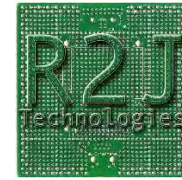
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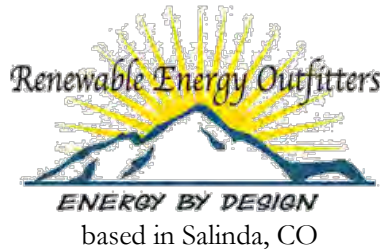
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based in Salinda, CO



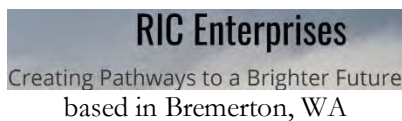
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