

**Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter * Waukesha Environmental Action League * Midwest Environmental Advocates
* Advocates for Renewable Energy * Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters * Clean Wisconsin * Wisconsin
Environment * Citizens Utility Board * RENEW WI * Physicians for Social Responsibility *
Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice**

Governor Jim Doyle
P.O. Box 7863
Madison, WI 53707

April 28, 2010

RE: Please Veto SB 273

Dear Governor Doyle,

We, the undersigned businesses and organizations, urge you to veto SB 273, which would undermine Wisconsin's current renewable energy standards under Act 141. Signing this bill will result in less renewable solar, wind and biomass energy for Wisconsin at a time when our economy and our environment desperately need more, not less, of these technologies to decrease our dependence on dirty fossil fuels.

New development companies across the country are attempting to define gasification facilities as "green" renewable energy. Yet this technology, a glorified form of incineration that is burdened with many of the same cost and environmental drawbacks, has never been successfully deployed anywhere in this country. Developers are seeking tax incentives, grants and renewable energy credits at the expense of recycling and true renewable energy programs.

Please end your tenure as Governor by vetoing the bill that will undermine Wisconsin's efforts to become a leader on genuine renewable energy. The benefits of doing so will be recognized for years to come.

We have further specific concerns about gasification-based waste-to-energy projects, which we have detailed below.

Financial Assistance & the Reality of Cost

Alliance Federated Energy has an offer to build a gasification plant at an unknown location, at an estimated cost of \$225 million dollars. That seems like a high price tag to create only 45-50 jobs.

Although the AFE proposal is for 1,200 tons per day (tpd) the best comparison the company can offer is Hitachi Metals, a 200 ton per day facility in Japan. When the City of Sacramento, CA was faced with a similar proposal they sent representatives to Japan and concluded by a unanimous vote NOT to accept gasification in Sacramento. (1)

Gasification and all forms of incineration compete with recycling for materials and financial incentives. Facilities that utilize combustion, no matter what they are called, destroy valuable resources and are not consistent with long-range sustainability.

Because these facilities are expensive and demand a steady stream of waste, they often put communities at risk. The City of Harrisburg, PA is looking at \$288 million dollars of incinerator debt and may have to file for bankruptcy. (2)

Air Quality Issues

Combustion of waste, or gas created from waste, generates pollution. During the burning of syngas, ultra fine particles containing volatile organic compounds, sulfur dioxide, heavy metals, mercury, and persistent organic pollutants such as dioxins and furans are released into the atmosphere. (3)

Zero Waste: A Goal to Aim For

Instead of looking at gasification, why not make a serious commitment to Zero Waste? Following a goal of zero waste maximizes recycling, creates jobs, and reduces pollution. This is the best option to improve our environment.


Unlike gasification, Zero Waste programs exist throughout the world and across the United States. These programs are flourishing and can provide excellent examples of achievable sustainability.

The City of San Francisco recovers 72% of the materials it discards. This is the direction Wisconsin should be moving towards. (4)

Please Veto SB 273

Again, we implore you to veto SB 273 because it is wrong for Wisconsin. This bill sets a very dangerous precedent of adding language at the very end of the legislative session to benefit companies that have no track record for the services they want to provide. There are hundreds of established clean energy companies in Wisconsin whose businesses will be severely jeopardized by diminished incentives that will result from this hasty, detrimental policy.


Sincerely,



Shahla M. Werner, PhD

Director

Sierra Club- John Muir Chapter



Charlene Lemoine

Waste Issues Representative

Waukesha County Environmental Action League



Kimberlee Wright
Executive Director
Midwest Environmental Advocates

s/ Shaina Kilcoyne

Shaina Kilcoyne
Coalition Coordinator
Advocates for Renewable Energy


Advocates for Renewable Energy is a coalition of over 50 renewable energy businesses, labor groups, and environmental organizations advocating for passage of an Enhanced Renewable Portfolio Standard and Distributed Renewable Generation provisions.



Dan Kohler
Director
Wisconsin Environment



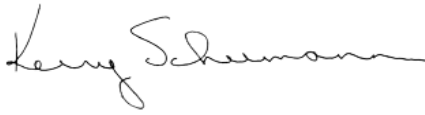
Keith Reopelle
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s/ Pam Kleiss

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Executive Director
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Wisconsin Chapter

s/ Judy Miner

Judy Miner
Executive Director
Wisconsin Network for Peace & Justice

(1) "Plasma Gasification Plan Goes Up in Smoke for Sacramento." Calif. Government Technology *Jan 19, 2009*, By *Chad Vander Veen*, Associate Editor <http://www.govtech.com/gt/588496>

(2) "Harrisburg Faces Possible Bankruptcy, As Mayor Linda Thompson and Council Weight Their Options". by The Patriot News. February 14, 2010
http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2010/02/harrisburg_faces_bankruptcy_in.html

(3) An Industry Blowing Smoke: 10 Reasons Why Gasification, Pyrolysis and Plasma Incineration are Not "Green Solutions" - Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) 6/09
http://nobiomassburning.org/docs/Industry_Blowing_Smoke.pdf

(4) San Francisco Zero Waste http://www.sfenvironment.org/our_programs/overview.html?ssi=3