

Sens. Franken, Tester Introduce Legislation to Promote Community Wind Projects

Friday, October 21, 2011

Yesterday, U.S. Sens. Al Franken (D-Minn.) and Jon Tester (D-Mont.) introduced legislation that would promote the local production of wind energy by providing tax credits to more community wind projects across the country.

Sens. Franken and Tester introduced the "Community Wind Act," which would expand the existing small wind Investment Tax Credit to projects with capacity up to 20 megawatts (MW). Currently, a 30 percent investment tax credit is available for wind turbines with nameplate capacity up to 100 kilowatts. This legislation amends the credit by expanding it to projects with total capacity of no more than 20 MW. There is no restriction on the size of any individual turbine.

"Locally-owned wind projects are an important part of our nation's energy future and they're a great investment for rural communities in Minnesota because their profits go right back to farmers and members of rural communities," said Sen. Franken. "Unfortunately, these projects often have difficulty getting financing. This legislation would make it easier for community wind projects to get up and running and help communities all over Minnesota and all over the country invest in the future."

"Montana possesses immense potential for wind energy development," said Sen. Tester. "Initiatives like this put rural communities on a level playing field when developing their own energy sources to create jobs and grow local economies. This bill is an important step forward for gaining energy independence and I hope the Senate passes this common-sense bill as soon as possible."

More information on the Community Wind Act is available [here \(http://franken.senate.gov/files/docs/111021_Wind_OnePage.pdf\)](http://franken.senate.gov/files/docs/111021_Wind_OnePage.pdf) and the full text of the bill can be found [here \(http://franken.senate.gov/files/docs/111021_Wind_Bill.pdf\)](http://franken.senate.gov/files/docs/111021_Wind_Bill.pdf). The legislation has the support of over 40 energy stakeholders in Minnesota and many more across the country. A list of supporting organizations is available [here \(http://franken.senate.gov/files/docs/111021_Wind_Letter.pdf\)](http://franken.senate.gov/files/docs/111021_Wind_Letter.pdf).

Sen. Franken has long been an advocate of wind power and other forms of renewable energy. Earlier this year, he was named to the Senate Energy Committee and since then, he and his staff have held a series of meetings, site visits and listening sessions with energy interests across the state. More information on Sen. Franken's work on wind energy can be found [here \(http://franken.senate.gov/?p=issue&id=142\)](http://franken.senate.gov/?p=issue&id=142).