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The Empire Club Presents

## **Wind Generates Controversy: The Financial, Legal and Political Consequences of Ontario's Green Energy Act**

Chairman: Tim Reid, President, The Empire Club of Canada

### **Head Table Guests**

**Harry Seymour**, Past President, The Empire Club of Canada

**Sandy MacLeod**, Science Teacher, Kincardine Secondary School

**Mark Davis**, Deputy-Mayor, Arran-Elderslie

**Stefan Preisenhammer**, Member, Board of Directors, Oppose Belwood Wind Farm

**Verity Craig**, Managing Director, CV Management, and Director, The Empire Club of Canada

**Jackie Tsui**, Student, Albert Campbell Collegiate Institute

**Captain Daniel Saugh**, QOR Regimental Chaplain

**Michael Trebilcock**, Professor of Law and Endowed Chair Holder in Law and Economics, University of Toronto

**Sylvia Jones**, MPP, Dufferin-Caledon; and

**Ian Hanna**, Vice-President and Chair, Wind Concerns Ontario

### **Introduction by Tim Reid**

It is now my great pleasure to introduce our keynote speaker this afternoon. Just before I do that, I just want to make it fairly clear that the Empire Club, we like to remain neutral. We believe there's two sides to every story; and this one is somewhat controversial. We are delighted as we presented the other side a number of weeks ago. And we've had some pretty controversial speakers over the years. And I just want everybody to know that we do this. We are a speaker's forum of record for over 107 years, John, something like that. And we've had our fair share, like Jacques Parizeau, Henry Morgentaler and Conrad Black. So, you're in good company, John.

John Laforest has become known across Ontario as a crusader and a coordinator of the anti-wind turbines movement. He is president of Wind Concerns Ontario, which is connected to more than 50 local organizations and was a major organizer of two rallies at Queen's Park, Bluffs Monitor Newspaper 2010. He was telling me about his schedule that he's been on. It's almost like somebody's running for an election, where he's been in an RV for the last, you know, 36 communities in 44 days so we're delighted he could find his way down the Don Valley to Front St.

John is a longtime community activist, whose career highlights include working in government, managing Public Opinion Research, organizing political campaigns, running for public office, and leading Wind Concerns. To date, WCO has successively halted all offshore wind development until further notice.

180 motions, a moratorium for municipal councils that represent a combined of 2 million Ontarians. John manages the day-to-day fight to prevent further development of industrial wind turbines in Ontario; advocating for a full moratorium on future development until negative environmental, economic and human health effects are addressed.

Local democracy is restored to planning decisions and justice is given to whom properties have been devalued and health impacted by existing developments.

Laforest regularly speaks at rallies, public meetings to municipal councils around Ontario and has delivered guest lectures at the U of T on citizen involvement and an environmental assessments, and approved approvals process at the Guelph Humber on earned media and grassroots lobbying. Proponents of industrial wind energy have publicly acknowledged the effectiveness of WCO's efforts to halt wind development, calling its media strategy sophisticated, its lobbying efforts effective and referring to Ontario as the ground for zero opposition to industrial wind development in North America. Ladies and gentlemen, John Laforest.

### **John Laforest**

Thank you very much. It is an honor to be considered controversial by a body held in such high esteem. I want to thank Tim Reid and the Board of Directors of the Empire Club of Canada for giving Wind Concerns Ontario and me the opportunity to address the Club on the topic of wind generated controversy, the financial, legal, and political consequences of Ontario's Green Energy Act. It is truly an honor to be here today.

It was fitting when we discussed the topic of my address that we chose to include the word controversy at that time. The fact that I'm even here behind this podium addressing this Club has in itself proven to be controversial.

I'm going to speak to you today about the growing movement of opposition to industrial wind energy in the province of Ontario, and the challenges Ontario's Green Energy Act faces from a financial, legal and political perspective. But before I get into that, I will first explain how a guy like me, a 25 year old who grew up in the city, finds himself president of predominantly rural organization focused on opposition to industrial wind turbines. I'm likely one of the youngest individuals ever to address the Empire Club, and probably one of just a few have done so as a full-time volunteer.

You see, it all began with a walk on the beach in Scarborough. In the shadow of the mighty Scarborough Bluffs, where I grew up. I was taking a walk with someone I had met in my capacity as the Federal Liberal Riding President for Scarborough Guildwood, and we met a man named Roy Wright, who is with us today, who told me Toronto Hydro wanted to install 60 to 100 industrial wind turbines, two to four kilometers off the Scarborough Bluffs. At first, I wasn't sure that was such a bad idea. But I began to see the process and watch how flawed it was. Watching this failed process played out. I got involved to help residents fight for a fair process, a good decision and to make sure that their voices were being heard.

At first, I was able to balance my involvement with the Liberal Party and my support for save the Toronto Bluffs, the local group opposing Toronto Hydro's plan. But that all changed when Dalton McGuinty announced the Green Energy Act, and cited Scarborough Bluffs residents' actions as the kind of nimbyism he was planning to shut down and remove from the Democratic debate. I got a call from a reporter with the Toronto Star who asked me to comment on the Premier's remarks and characterization of Scarborough Bluffs residents, and I had to pick between my community and the political party I joined when I was 14 years old. My choice was clear. I came home from the hospital to Guildwood.

I responded by asking, "If the facts are on his side, why bludgeon us with legislation? Why not just do an environmental assessment and prove us wrong?"

But the Green Energy Act also took away our rights of participation; and my response to that was: residents will not lay down, we will continue to get louder and louder and we will not go away. Wind Concerns Ontario has kept that promise and the Government of Ontario has yet to do any form of legitimate scientific assessment into the negative impacts of industrial wind development on human health or the environment.

I am pleased to report however, two years to the day of McGuinty's announcement of Ontario's Green Energy Act, his government nailed the last nail in the coffin of offshore wind development in the province of Ontario by imposing a second moratorium on all offshore industrial wind development until further scientific studies are done. That's good news for all Ontarians. This government bowed to pressure because of a firestorm of outrage that threatened the seats of many liberal MPs and cabinet ministers. But it's important to note even with this, they have not yet engaged us in any meaningful consultation about the scientific assessments they intend to undertake, which suggests they still don't get it.

It's that lack of commitment to proper scientific assessments of negative effects on human health and the environment that have turned Ontario's Green Energy Act into the dirty bathwater in which the green energy baby is poised to be thrown out. You see the positions have hardened, battle lines have been drawn, the evidence is clear and the industry and government still choose special interests over the public interests. Profits over people, and denialism in the place of valid independent assessment of impacts.

This is not an academic debate, best decided by literature reviews, there is a real problem in real communities, with real people living near real wind turbines in the province of Ontario, and real doctors who have examined these real people agree. Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of health can read all the literature of using computer models she'd like, but until a proper epidemiological health study is done to determine why so many people suffer serious negative health effects when exposed to industrial wind turbines, those glossy reports are not going to be acceptable to victims, and they should not be accepted by all Ontarians.

There isn't a community in Ontario where industrial wind turbines have been installed, where some residents have not had adverse health effects. Put another way, when industrial wind turbines are installed in a community in Ontario, some people always get sick. It's wrong. It's not something we can allow to happen. We must have this addressed if there's going to be any further industrial wind development happening in Ontario.

The industry's position though is a curious one, they seek billions of dollars from all Ontarians. They seek to remove local democratic control from the planning process. They also get a streamlining of approvals that removes decision making from democratically elected policymakers. Instead, these critical decisions are left to those unelected bureaucrats. The Ministry of the Environment whose job it is to simultaneously facilitate and approve projects in a manner that is not subject to freedom of information.

In the meantime, citizens have been told to make sacrifices for this industry, when all the while they still won't even humour us and support an independent health study and safe setbacks from homes based on these results. You've got to ask yourself why? If nothing is wrong, what's the problem? Just do the study and prove it. If you want to gut the process and local democracy and jack up residents' hydro bills, it

seems to me the very least you owe them is a guarantee that the decisions will be based on the best possible science, not just what's best for those who plan to profit.

Based on independent science done globally, by an esteemed collection of highly ethical and independent experts, it is clear a setback of 550 meters is unconscionably close to people's homes.

Industrial wind developers recognize there's enough of a problem too, because many have become real estate investors when they're forced to buy out their victims. Strangely, through each of these agreements comes a gag order, where victims are forced to sign in order to settle. They sign away their right to speak about what happened and what caused them to need to be bought out by the wind developer. Someone at the head table today has recently signed one of those deals, and I'm proud to be speaking for her as well.

But you've got to wonder what is it that the industry knows that they don't want you to know? Is it any wonder that target communities, fully aware of this industry's awful reputation fight so hard to keep them out? It has become clear the wind industry cannot be trusted to take the health and wellbeing of community members into consideration when pursuing their projects. It has become clear the Government of Ontario and the Chief Medical Officer of Health failed to act as independent protectors of citizens; and for those reasons, Wind Concerns Ontario fights every single proposal any industrial wind developer brings forward and continues to advocate for a full moratorium on any further industrial wind development until a proper third-party epidemiological health study is done.

We also seek to have existing turbines in communities where negative health effects are being reported turned off to prevent any further harm, while we get to the bottom of what needs to happen to make these projects safe. I've met far too many people who have been forced from their homes or living at home and suffering. I've seen how devastated those are who are bought out and lose their right to speak. Imagine that. But the industry has seen it too; the current chair of the Canadian Wind Energy Association recently shared this very podium and delivered an address that was light on facts and heavy on motherhood and apple pie, in which she failed to mention some of the activities of her own company. She's employed by a Spanish wind developer that just bought four homes in Ontario from victims of industrial wind turbines who had to abandon them. Another sale is pending, which will bring that to five.

Her company has also purchased homes in Australia, where folks have been reporting negative health symptoms. They too were gagged. So, it's curious how she and her organization, the Canadian Wind Energy Association can deny anything is wrong. Why the government allows this to happen and allows companies like hers to sign gag clauses with victims is beyond me. It's clear, something is wrong today in the province of Ontario, and Wind Concerns Ontario will not allow that to stand.

The lack of process and victimization of communities is perhaps best seen and most broadly felt by the approval process for renewable energy applications. Ontario is alone in the world when it relates to having a centralized approval process that denies municipality, the right to plan and approve local projects. They have no zoning control left; they have no right to approve. The Official Plan isn't worth the paper it's written on when a wind developer comes to town.

Currently, an industrial wind developer has the right to install wind turbines wherever they see fit, as long as they have a Green Energy Act approval issued by the Government of Ontario. Municipalities are

obligated to issue building permits to industrial wind developers, as ordered by the province of Ontario, something not seen in any other form of planning decision in this province. What's more, there are no zoning requirements or exemptions for industrial wind developers, meaning all land is fair game. This is wrong. And this is something that has galvanized opposition to industrial wind energy in the province of Ontario.

Wind Concerns Ontario is proud to count among its allies over 80 municipal councils that represent a combined 2 million Ontarians. They've called on the province to restore local planning control, but first put in place a provincewide moratorium until a proper third-party epidemiological health study is complete, and setbacks can be based on noise guidelines that are complete with science that's up to date. So that means that 80 municipal councils that represent more than 2 million Ontarians have lost faith in the process put in place by the Government of Ontario, and do not see the industrial wind lobby as a reliable or trustworthy partner in determining what is best for residents' future either. And that is worth taking note of.

Now, let me turn to the environment for a minute. Because that's what we're all here about, right? That's what the industry's big story is, it's all about the environment. I'm going to tell you about a few places Ontario where I've been, and I want you to think when I when I explained this to you whether this sounds green to you. When I get into a debate with folks from the wind industry, they often love to ask questions like, "Have you been to Denmark or Germany, or some other far-flung place in Europe?" As if a flight across the ocean and seeing wind turbines running in these countries would result in some sort of religious experience that would turn me into a believer. I will tell you about some places I have been, where it's clear those who claim industrial wind is a green form of production have not because if they have, they would realize that these projects are about as green as their transatlantic carbon footprints.

Let's start with Thunder Bay. Thunder Bay is known for a lot of things, but one gem in Ontario's most populous Northwestern Ontario city is the northwestern escarpment and the Loch Lomond Watershed protection lands that's up on that escarpment. That land protects a pure water source from any negative human impacts and inappropriate land use, and it has for over 90 years. These pristine 17,000 acres have been preserved for generations of Thunder Bay residents, mindful of the importance of preserving habitat and watershed protection lands to protect the water source itself. My first visit to Thunder Bay included my first ride on a snowmobile, so I could see with my own eyes what's at stake up on the escarpment. I've never been so bundled up in my life as I was when we rode 600 feet up this mountain and toured the proposed project site. I was also surprised to see buried in the native boreal forest that is common in the area, sugar maple bushes, which are decidedly out of place that far north. These are Canada's northern most sugar maples. Some of these maples are 150 years old, and there are thousands of them up on that escarpment. Local residents harvest the maple syrup, and I can attest myself that at some of the best maple syrup I've ever tasted. It is believed based on the developer's plans that 4000 sugar maples will be cut down, and another few hundred white pines will have to be removed to make way for a project that would amount to a rounding error of energy production in Ontario's grid. Can anyone justify their cutting and blasting as being good for the environment?

When we talk about Dorion, Ontario next. Dorion is a small community about an hour or so outside of Thunder Bay down the Trans-Canada highway that will soon be home to one of Ontario's newest industrial wind developments. When I was in Thunder Bay in December, a local resident and I

registered at the development to head onto the site claiming we're visiting some Crown Land to go ice fishing. I've never iced fished in my life.

Once we were in, I got to see firsthand what it looks like when an industrial wind developer clear cuts and blast roads 30 meters wide. When they seek out all the ridge tops and blast them flat. I saw what 400 sticks of dynamite can do to flatten what was once a peak. Even the wind developer there recognizes in their project evaluation report that 24% of bird species there fly at blade height. If birds are slaughtered in the woods, and no one is there to see it, did it still happen? If the ridge tops that are dynamited flat, but no one's there to object, does that make it okay? Can any environmentalist say with a straight face, "this sort of destruction is good for the environment"? I ask you how green is that?

Let's move on to Prince Edward County now, where I was proud to visit again and speak to a rally of local residents less than two weeks ago. Prince Edward County is home to Ostrander Point, which is owned by the Ministry of Natural Resources. It's Crown Land that's part of a globally recognized Important Bird Area and is home to endangered species.

When we went to visit Ostrander Point we came across wetlands and bush backing on to a protected shoreline of Lake Ontario without any development in sight. Gilead Power, however, is seeking from the Ministry of Natural Resources permission through an Endangered Species Act to quote, "kill, harm and harass," the Blanding's Turtle and Whip-poor-will, both species protected by the Endangered Species Act and were known to make their home at Ostrander Point. When Gilead Power is done killing harming and harassing --remember these are their words not mine--the Blanding's Turtle and the Whip-poor-will bird, they'd also like permission to disrupt and destroy their habitat as well. One can only assume that those who are just harmed in harassed will go and die somewhere else. Can this really be seen as green?

According to the Sierra Club of Canada, who is on record as being concerned with the Blanding's Turtle, industrial wind is good, and Wind Concerns Ontario members who support environmental protection are part of some plot to undermine the Green Energy Act. My response is simple. They are part of a plot to undermine the Endangered Species Act and need to decide whether their campaigns to protect the Blanding's Turtle are fairweather, or whether the Sierra Club will stand with the environment at moments like this when tough decisions need to be made and the lives of listed endangered species hang in the balance. Endangered species are protected for a reason, and no one waving \$230,000 in the government's face, as Gilead Power is, should be able to change that. That's Wind Concerns Ontario's position and at the Sierra Club of Canada wants to maintain any credibility it will become theirs too. Just yesterday, students at Bishop Allen Academy Catholic Secondary in Etobicoke wrote me. Their choice was pretty clear. Let me share with you what they had to say.

"Hello, John. We are a group of students from Bishop Allen Academy Catholic Secondary in Etobicoke. We are extremely concerned about the well-being of the Blanding's Turtle's habitat within Prince Edward County and have recently formulated a petition within our own community directed at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. We are wondering if you could supply us with any other information about the situation and advice on how to raise more awareness within our community. Thank you. Hope to hear from you."

That's an amazing thing. These students get it, but the Sierra Club of Canada doesn't. And they're reaching out to Wind Concerns Ontario for advice on how to protect endangered species because the Sierra Club of Canada won't.

Before I move on to the experience on Wolf Island, I want to speak for a couple of seconds to the students from Albert Campbell Collegiate from Scarborough, Ontario, my hometown and where my grassroots activism first ignited.

Don't ever let people tell you that you're too young to make a difference, or that you need to wait to shape the destiny of your community. If there's something you're passionate about, or something you're concerned about, get involved and work with your neighbors and friends to stand up. I'm going to be happy to give those students at Bishop Allen advice and how to shape their own ideas for what they can do to protect the Blanding's Turtles, even with the shameful silence of the Sierra Club of Canada, and I hope the benefit for them will be an entrance or continuation of involvement into fighting for the things that they care about.

Now, let me tell you about Wolf Island near Kingston. That is part of the same important Migratory Bird path as Prince Edward County. On Wolf Island, there are 86 turbines installed, and bird and bat mortality rates are six times higher than what the industrial wind developer told the province they expected they would be. So, the Minister of the Environment changed the acceptable kill rate. That's what happens if the guidelines don't fit this industry's need. They change.

Environmental protection has been given a backseat to industrial wind development in Ontario. There are so many birds and bats being slaughtered and rare birds literally disappearing from Wolf Island now, that TransAlta has created two full time jobs for people to drive around the island and trucks collecting bird and bat carcasses. Are these some of the so called green jobs Dalton McGuinty keeps talking about.

We also know from Wolf Island, that the wildlife population has declined dramatically near wind turbines. But again, because the government has required so little science, we don't know why.

I think I've painted a pretty clear picture of the environmental destruction these projects bring and now is likely a good time to remind you that every megawatt of wind energy we install on the grid is backed up by fossil fuel generation. Everyone knows that wind doesn't always blow; the industry especially. Therefore, we are building twice the capacity we need, because wind energy is so reliable. Without a backup, we run the risk of brownouts or blackouts. The stage has now been well set to clearly express why there is such fierce opposition to industrial wind energy out there.

Now, let's turn to the consequences this energy production has from a financial, legal, and political perspective. Much of what I've discussed so far applies most directly to impacted communities where these projects are proposed. The next topics impact all of us.

Before I address some of the financial consequences of the Green Energy Act, it's time to deal with the notion that the government is seeking to pay industrial wind developers a premium for an unreliable power source that cannot be stored and literally wrecks the place. This is an absurd proposition. But this is government policy in the province of Ontario today. The Green Energy Act is also responsible for the feed-in tariff program and can be attributed with bringing the province deals like Samsung to

manufacture and install industrial wind development in Ontario. Ontario's feed-in tariff program requires the province to purchase electricity from industrial wind developers when generated, period. So regardless of demand, at rates that are usually 300% or higher more than the actual value of a kilowatt of electricity on the open market in Ontario, we're forced to purchase it. Because Ontario has such a strong baseload capacity and because of declining demand for electricity, the commodity price of electricity has been falling in Ontario and continues to fall.

But we all know electricity rates are continually increasing. They're up 84% since Dalton McGuinty became premier in 2003. George Smitherman, the former Minister of Energy, who concocted the Green Energy Act, promised Ontarians annual rate increases of about 1% a year to pay for all of this. The government now tells us rates are going to go up another further 46% over the next five years, and a majority of that increase will be due to the cost of implementing Ontario's Green Energy Act. To quell voter outrage at a cost of the Green Energy Act scheme, the McGuinty government added a \$5 billion amount to our provincial debt over the next five years to supply all Ontarians with the Ontario Clean Energy Benefit, it's an anti-conservation move. So, it goes against other aspects of their policy because it's giving you 10% back of your hydro bill.

If we paid based on market prices, and supply and demand mattered in our electricity sector, not based on what was convenient for the industrial wind lobby, that's \$5 billion the province of Ontario would not be spending to try and buy your votes back. What's more, the requirement to purchase power whenever it is generated, not taking into account demand has resulted in more power surpluses, which in turn have resulted in expensive dumping of this wind energy we're forced to buy into neighboring jurisdictions such as the US.

At times, we not only give power we've purchased for 13 and a half cents a kilowatt away, but we pay our neighbors to take it off our hands. This simply adds to the cost consumers later pay through that provincial benefit we all pay on our energy bills. That's why electricity rates keep going up.

Ontario Liberals will tell you that the Samsung deal is going to cost this province \$461 million in incentives, while Samsung is going to generously invest \$7 billion in Ontario. We all know companies like Samsung don't find themselves with \$7 billion for trading it for sums of money like the incentives Liberals are offering. The purchase power agreements that Ontario has committed to with Samsung will cost ratepayers \$1.1 billion a year for 20 years, a full \$22 billion for unreliable power we don't need that harms communities and we're likely end up dumping in neighboring jurisdiction anyways. This is ludicrous. We all know even before the latest recession, that Ontario's energy manufacturing heavy energy users were in trouble, and especially those in forestry and manufacturing sectors. Well over 200,000 jobs were lost in those sectors since 2003, in advance of this latest recession. The Ontario Liberals economic policy on green energy will guarantee those jobs won't be coming back. Because we're making our economy economically uncompetitive with neighboring jurisdictions because of our energy policy. We cannot allow that to be our future. We cannot allow that future for Ontarians. As a guy who's 25 years old, I can't allow this government to do that to my generation.

When the CD Howe Institute reports electricity bills for Ontarians will be up \$310 higher than they are now over the next few years to pay for all this, we need to take notice. When that same report determines the rate of subsidy for each so-called green job is \$179,000 per year, we need to recognize how many people going to real jobs and paying their taxes it takes to subsidize every one of these phony so called green jobs.

The reality of these massive subsidies and the feed-in tariff programs, Samsung-like deals are no way to create a strong economy in Ontario. This is a pathway to bankruptcy, which is why so many jurisdictions and whose footsteps Dalton McGuinty wants all of us to travel are being bailed out by their European friends. It's important to note that in communities where industrial wind turbines are operating, there is a reported property value loss of up to 40% within a five-kilometer radius of industrial wind turbines, meaning each project wipes out millions of dollars of equity and property tax based in host communities.

That lack of justice for homeowners is a good segue into the legal consequences of Ontario's Green Energy Act. As many are aware, Ian Hanna, of Prince Edward County stood up on behalf of all Ontarians and challenged the regulations of Ontario's Green Energy Act. Wind Concerns Ontario was proud to support those efforts, and we're anxiously awaiting Mr. Hanna's appeal.

In Chatham-Kent citizens have opposed the only renewable energy approval to make it through Ontario's Green Energy Act through an environmental review tribunal, where the facts of this serious health effects were discussed in great detail. This could prove to be a critical step in preventing further industrial wind development at irresponsibly close distances. Wind Concerns Ontario supports an aggressive legal strategy to seek to prevent further industrial wind development through environmental review tribunals, like the one in Chatham, Kent. It is also exploring the role of liability held by landowners who host wind turbines, because these projects have negative impacts on non-participants, so the folks who are trading \$5,000 a year for their neighbor's health may find that they too have legal troubles. And that will create a very interesting situation for wind developers, who will have to decide whether defending those who hold their leases is worth the extreme cost that will surely come with it for those individuals.

We're seeking other innovative legal avenues to restore some of the justice lost through Ontario's Green Energy Act. The bottom line is, we're going to continue to fight, we're not going to give up and the legal realm is one where the industry can't donate their way to influence. They cannot lobby their way to influence because that's not how the justice system works. That is the last vestige of hope for opponents when there's bad politics happening.

Wind Concerns Ontario has also committed to ensuring that any renewable energy approvals that are issued before this fall's election will be taken through an environmental review tribunal, forcing developers to face delays of at least six months and the potential to have their project approval overturned by a tribunal, which has not expressed the same interest in propping up a failed industry in Ontario. That's good news for all residents because it guarantees not a single development can be approved by this government, with construction starting before the election.

Finally, what may be the most critical element and certainly why Wind Concerns Ontario is controversial, are the political consequences of Ontario's Green Energy Act. I will say without hesitation that Wind Concerns Ontario, and our member groups will be working hard on the ground in the three dozen ridings in Ontario where we have groups to defeat the Liberal government and replace it with one that is prepared to act with courage on this file.

And to be fair, I want you to know that this was not the goal all along. In September 2009, when I was within three weeks of becoming the president of Wind Concerns Ontario, we went to Ottawa to meet

with the Canadian Wind Energy Association. And we asked them to support legitimate scientific studies and forget these industry shams, and they refused any leeway on studies. And my message to Robert Hornung, in his own boardroom was, then we will defeat you. If you want to fight us on the ground around Ontario, we're more than willing to have that fight. Because that's a fight we can win, and it's a fight your members can't, because you can't hire enough people to take us on in our own communities. And since that day, only one project has made it through the six-month approval window guaranteed by George Smitherman because Wind Concerns Ontario resident community members have stood up and fought members of CANWEA, on the ground in their communities, and we're going to do the same to their political allies in the Ontario Liberal Party when it comes time for us all to vote in October. The industry and the government's shameful position on human health effects and refusal to support a study and stop future development until it is complete. With the addition of their attack on local democracy, citizen involvement, environmental protections, and the economic health and well-being of this province will not be allowed to stand long. We are counting the days to October 6.

Wind Concerns Ontario has been calling since day one for a moratorium on all wind development until that health study is done. We've been calling for the restoration of local control in Ontario, and an end to the feed-in tariff program and justice for those who are suffering the ill effects of living too close to industrial wind turbines.

Our lobbying efforts have been successful in shifting the policies of all three opposition parties in Ontario, away from the Liberals' vision. The NDP have come out in favor of local planning control, and believe these projects should be developed with public agencies as opposed to private investments. The Green Party supports local control and wants community-based projects, but they're still very much in favor of the subsidies. The Progressive Conservatives, however, have gone the farthest. They support ending the Samsung deal, getting rid of the feed-in tariff program, restoring local democratic control to democratically elected local councils. They do support a health study and have come out in favor of a moratorium. These are major steps that we have made due to the strong efforts of citizen advocacy around Ontario. The Liberals and industry's attempts to use money and paid media campaigns to solve their public relations problem have not worked. And in the dying days of this government, Wind Concerns Ontario members are here to say we promise you it won't work.

Now, I'm sure we've all heard the saying the truth shall set you free. As President of Wind Concerns Ontario, I'm fortunate that each day, my only job is to speak truth about the reality of industrial wind energy in the province of Ontario, and work to organize and mobilize those who share our view, so we are well positioned to win this legally and politically with the truth. And as long as those financials are so completely out to lunch for this industry, we grow daily.

So, I want to ask you, the next time you think about industrial wind to consider these points. Ask yourself why an industry would hide from science if the truth was on their side? Why would any form of legitimate study be a problem if you've got nothing to hide? Why would an industry support the end of local democracy? If these projects were so great for communities, people should be fighting for these projects, if they are what the industry talks about. But we know that they're not. And that's why I'm here today.

To those who are involved in the industry, I want you to ask yourself a few questions too Just how far are you willing to go? And how much of what you and your company are doing would you like to explain to a judge? Because if it goes on much longer, I promise you one of you will have to.

It is clear, Ontario's Green Energy Act has become an example of overreaching, anti-democratic, anti-science legislation that is serving to hold our economy back at a time we cannot allow that to happen. Having heard what I've said today, I'm sure now everyone in this room will understand why this speech was billed as controversial, but you probably also understand the core problem. The wind industry does not want anyone to speak truth to power, because doing so gets in the way of their business and cannot and it cannot withstand the cold hard realities that this trade is built on. That's why Wind Concerns is dedicated to speaking truth to power on the topic of industrial wind, because someone has to, now more than ever. Thank you very much for your time.

### **Tim Reid**

Okay, thank you, John. Before we get on to the more formal Thank you, I do have some questions. I got a lot of questions. I will get through as many of them as I can. As you know, we're on live television so we are restricted in time.

### **Questions & Answers**

**Q: If you say Ontario communities do not want wind, how do you explain communities like Chatham-Kent, who actively seek wind energy for its significant local economics?**

**JL:** There aren't significant local economics to wind energy. We've seen that and I've got to tell you, I'm going to be in Chatham-Kent on June 6, because I was invited by local residents to hold a stop on the Truth About Turbines tour. Chatham-Kent is not in favor of industrial wind, and I'm sure Maria van Brahma will hear that message on October sixth at the ballot box.

**Q: Can you provide support for the statement that hydro rates have increased by 84% since McGinty was elected, and will increase a further 40% in the next five years?**

**JL:** Yeah, absolutely. Dwight Duncan said they're going to go up 46% in the next five years. He's the Finance Minister and the former Minister of Energy, so I would assume if there's a question from someone in the industry, they should take him at his word, because he's certainly on their side of the fight.

**Q: Civilization needs power. Where do we get it from? It's all about the lesser of so many evils.**

**JL:** I don't buy the lesser bigger evils argument when people are profiting from forcing their neighbors off their land. That is a terrible argument that we cannot use in the province of Ontario. The reality is, all other forms of energy production live by strict regulation. Wind energy in Ontario is the Wild West. These are proponent driven self-assessments. There is no local oversight. There's no local control. The industry should be ashamed of itself from reaching this far. To say that this is credible form of energy production as well, is a very weak argument, because it has to be backed up by fossil fuel. So, if you're pro wind, you're pro natural gas. That's Ontario's long term energy plan. So, the folks in the wind industry are in favor of natural gas. And we know that because the folks in the natural gas industry fund the Canadian Wind Energy Association.

**Q: in 20 years of operation of turbines in Europe, health studies there don't satisfy WCO's request for scientific studies into half health effects. What will?**

**JL:** There's over 420 opposition groups in Europe spread out over 21 countries Wind Concerns Ontario is small potatoes when compared with the European platform against wind energy there. The reality is the studies that are cited by the wind industry are literature reviews, they study straw people in straw communities, we want studies of real people in real communities living near wind turbines. I've emailed with folks who live in Germany who have been forced from their home. I'm in touch with people in the United Kingdom where it's the same story. There is a World Wind Energy Association out there propagating the same bogus science no matter what jurisdiction they're in. There are 94 versions of CANWEA in 94 countries. The problem is none of these people support truly independent science that involves real people in real homes in real communities where there's real wind turbines until we're studying real people with independent doctors when concerns on chair will not accept the outcome.

**Q: Who funds WCO, and what is the yearly budget?**

**JL:** Nobody funds Wind Concerns Ontario, which is why I'm a volunteer. Wind Concerns Ontario's budget for 2010 was about \$8900; we run on fumes. The folks who slander us with this allegation of being funded by big oil, the nuclear industry fossil fuels, their side actually is. The Canadian Wind Energy Association represents TransAlta, one of Canada's largest coal companies. The Canadian Wind Energy Association represents SunCor, you may have heard of them, they're really active in the tar sands. They also represent Enbridge Gas. Does that sound to you like a green company? The folks CANWEA accused us of being funded from aren't funding us because their money is going to their five and a half million dollar budget and their 25 staff.

**Q: What are some of the negative health effects people are suffering from wind turbines and any idea what specifically causes it?**

**JL:** Well, when it comes to what's specifically causing the negative health effects, we'd need a proper study to determine that. Because the effects it impacts people in different ways. One of the single largest complaints that is felt around the world is sleep disturbance. So, people's inability to sleep at night because of a mix of what's believed to be low frequency sound and inaudible noise. There's also impacts where tinnitus is an example, that's a ringing in the ear. Folks suffer migraines that didn't suffer migraines before. But it's a devastating cumulative impact. Because imagine if every time you went home, you started to feel sick. Imagine if, at the end of the day of work, when you leave the office, most of us can't wait to get home. But imagine if home is the place you dread, because what's impacting your life when you get there, for the industry, to hear all these stories and to deny that there's a problem worth studying is beyond me. It's over 135 people in this province who are reporting negative health symptoms, at least a dozen of them have been bought out of their homes by industrial wind developers that believed enough that it was worth sinking a few hundred thousand dollars into those problems to make them go away. That's why Wind Concerns Ontario is supporting a study

**Q: When wind turbines are decommissioned, how much of the cement base and cabling underground will be removed?**

**JL:** It's a good question. I'd like someone to show me where wind turbines have ever been decommissioned in North America. Because if you take a drive out to California, you can see a bunch that were abandoned by wind developer there. You go to Hawaii; you can see what they look like when they rust and fall apart on their own. The reality is in Ontario, we don't have a plan to decommission wind turbines. We're talking bogus numbers like \$20,000, 17 years from now not adjusted for inflation. If the cranes to put them up rent for \$10,000 a day, how long, and at what cost do you think it is to get them to come down? The other thing we hear over and over again, is that they'll bury the cement in the field as opposed to hauling it out. So, there'll be a permanent scar on our agricultural land because of these turbines. When Wind Concerns Ontario succeeds, and a health study is done, and we've forced the decommissioning of your responsible projects, you better believe we'll be fighting to have those cement pads hauled out of the ground so that land can be restored to its previous purpose, which is feeding our province.

**Q: Okay, last question --and I apologize, I couldn't read them all, we've had great participation. But the last one, will the wind turbine companies still be around in 20 years due to decommissioning or closing them up?**

**JL:** I highly doubt it. And the reason they won't is the feed-in tariff program won't be around in 20 years to further incentivize them. The reason in Germany wind turbines do get brought down, it's because bigger ones go up in their place. So, their idea of decommissioning is called repowering. And so, you bring down a turbine that's 20 years old, and you put up an even bigger one, and you make even more money. So, there's a financial reason to do it. Broken turbine replaced by a working turbine, more money. In Ontario, there's not going to be a feed-in tariff program in 20 years, so these guys will be long gone. And we'll have however many turbines have been allowed to put up just rotting in these fields if we're not careful. Thank you.

### **Tim Reid**

I'd like to call on a Harry Seymour to come and thank our speaker more formally.

### **Note of Appreciation by Mr. Harry Seymour, Past President, The Empire Club of Canada**

Thank you, Mr. President. As Tim noted earlier, throughout our 108 year history, the Empire Club of Canada has endeavored to the best of its ability to show both sides of the story. Today, John's presentation has balanced with the Chair of Canadian Wind Energy Association delivered here at the same podium on April the 8th.

As a professional engineer, embrace the advances in technology that enhance our environment, and society as a whole. Charging fast forward to embrace the Green Label for the sake of wanting to be seen as leading the Green Revolution while destroying the beauty of and tourism industry in Ontario's countryside is not the answer. Witness the sharp decline in the Green Party's popular vote in the federal election on May 2nd.

If you want to leave a legacy for your children that you can be proud of, and they can afford, then the implementation of the Green Energy Act must be done in a thoughtful, logical, and totally transparent manner; with all the relevant issues on the table, including economic, socio economic, environmental, ecological, and health. Wind Concerns Ontario has grown from a small cluster of local wind action groups in October 2008, into a province wide force, representing 80 municipalities, with over 2 million Ontarians, funded in a large part with after tax dollars. Friends, there is a message there that no politician in Ontario should overlook. John, on behalf of the members of friends of the Empire Club of

Canada, I would like to thank you for your insightful presentation on one of the most relevant issues of the day.

**Concluding remarks by Tim Reid**

Thank you, Harry. John, as a token of our appreciation from the members of the Empire Club of Canada, I'd like to present you with a book that's called *Who Said That?* memorable notes, quotes and anecdotes selected from the Empire Club Canada speeches 1903 to 2003.

Okay, I'll motor through the rest of this because we're getting close to our cutoff time. Upcoming Events. Right now, we only have one more. We're hoping to have possibly two more, if not three. We have a former president of the Empire Club of Canada and now the president of Liberal Party of Canada Alfred Apps in this room on Thursday, June 9. It will be interesting; I have no doubt.

I would like to thank John Hannah and Sons for being our sponsor today. Thank you to Oppose Bellwood Win for sponsoring the VIP reception. I would like to thank the *National Post* or print sponsor.

This meeting is being broadcast live on Rogers TV and will be rebroadcast on Rogers TV over the next few weeks. We are grateful for their ongoing support.

John's speech will be available on our website within the next day or so at Empire Club.org. Yes, the Empire Club, believe it or not, is on Twitter and Facebook.

Thank you for all for coming. It was a great event. And so far, so good. Nobody's yelled at me and so we're all in good shape. Enjoy the rest of your day. We'll talk to you all soon.