

# In Support of the Pickens Plan

## Summary

In an effort to move towards energy independence the following suggestions are made for legislation. It is hoped that through support of alternative power generation, both in a centralized as well as distributive model, we will achieve the goal of zero foreign oil imports by 2020.

1. Rapid development of Midwest wind corridor wind farms. For this, legislation to expedite and help fund the development and installation of farms is needed.
2. Gradual improvement of the power grid to handle increased production of energy and demand on the grid. Legislation to encourage deployment of new grid components, upgrading of current structures and replacing aging systems.
3. Improving the emission standards for all new cars and gradual removal of old vehicles. Legislation changing the emission standards to encourage the adoption of natural gas and electric automobile standards.

Through these 3 simple steps, the US can move toward a state of energy independence. That is we will generate all of the energy we need within the borders of the country. This plan will achieve 2 goals. It will free us, as a nation from the need to defend resources outside of our immediate control. It will also spur internal economic growth through the development and improvement of our national infrastructure.

I hope that we can have a meeting regarding these proposals and developing them into a legislative plan. I look forward to hearing from you.

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We as a nation need to address the issue of energy now more than ever before. In this spirit I have joined and become active in the Pickens Plan for US Energy Independence and I want to invite you as my representative in the federal government to join me in supporting this unique vision.

We are a diverse group as a whole. We are Republicans, Democrats and Independents. We are Progressives and Conservatives. We are Centrists, Left and Right. When we talk with each other however, we do not ask. We do not care. We are first and foremost Citizens. Citizens of a country that is dependent on foreign oil and we see that this makes us weak as a nation. We see this and we demand that this change. So as one of your constituents, I call on that you, my elected official, to lead us to a safer, more secure future.

A future where we, as a nation, do not spend our treasure securing oil from around the globe. That we do not send our sons and daughters, brothers and sisters to war for a commodity that, in all truthfulness, we do not need. We are dependent on it because our government turned its back on the vision of the past. The vision that we would not be dependent on foreign oil. This vision was first seen more than 35 years ago. We are dependent because our government, as well as our own shortsightedness, lead us here. We turned our back on this vision and now I ask that you help us get back on course.

Specifically I am asking you to introduce, cosponsor or otherwise get behind legislation that will support the goals of energy security and independence. This is an issue of National security and it must be address as soon as possible, creating a independent, secure energy policy. This appears simple but I know that it is not. Having said that, I know that these actions are in the best interest of the country so we must work on them. Our nation must walk this difficult path if we are to succeed as a nation.

The first step on this path is to develop a system of Wind Farms along the “Wind Corridor” through the center of the country. This corridor extends for the Canadian Boarder in North Dakota to Texas. This is considered one of the consistently windiest places in the world, and a prime area to harvest the kinetic energy of the wind.

The second step is to make our transportation system less reliant on oil and more efficient. Natural gas and electric cars are the way to do this. By moving our national automobile fleet off oil, we will achieve the goal of no more foreign oil imports.

To achieve these goals I see several things that can be achieved through Federal intervention. Here are a few things that need to be addressed through legislation.

## **1. Clear the way for the wind farms themselves.**

Pass legislation that will encourage the building of the wind farms and purchasing/leasing the land for the farms. Craft environmental impact requirements for the construction of these wind farms. Legislation needs to be in place that will deter frivolous legal challenges to the construction of farms on aesthetic and specious environmental arguments.

This will be difficult ground to navigate. However, it must be noted that the dire state that we, as a nation, are in makes it essential that we act decisively now for the energy security of our nation. The road for this vital stage in the process of energy independence must be clear. Legislation spelling out the steps that need to be taken must be clear to expedite the construction and investment into these projects. With clear rules, investment capital will flow into these projects.

Looking at the New Deal and its projects that brought energy to a growing nation over the past 50 years, many would have been stopped in their tracks by current EPA rules and regulations. The great dam projects could never have passed through today's legal briar patches. Wind farms pose many fewer environmental hazards. It is imperative that we expedite the construction of these wind farms. The Congress needs to pass legislation that allows for a “Fast Track” system for the growth of these farms. Legislation that will define the unique issues posed by this technology so the “energy farmers” can address them in the initial design, speeding the construction process while still protecting our environment. This is a grand vision and we will need to be careful and deliberate in its execution.

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## *Points to consider in this process.*

### **a. Challenges on “Aesthetic Grounds”.**

This should only be considered only in the case of national parks, monuments or other “Unique” vistas. This is imperative in that anyone who can afford a lawyer has the potential to stop one of these farms because they do not want to see it. Developing a larger electricity generating capacity is too important to be tied up in this way.

### **b. Fast Track Environmental Impact Review. (EIS)**

Considering the large physical footprint that these wind farms represent, there can be the potential of a lot of legal challenges that will slow the process. This will increase the cost drastically. It is not uncommon for groups to slow development through the EIS process. For this project to succeed, it needs to have specific, clearly defined, environmental requirements. If this is addressed specifically in the legislative process with an eye on expediting the approval process, then administrative challenges will be reduced. This could possibly met with a Planned Action EIS. That is, one that covers the entire plan rather than individual parts. This way we streamline the process for the larger project while insuring protection of individual locations. We define the entirety of the project area and individuals, groups, companies fill in the “locations” identified and they start construction having the EIS completed in the overall Planned Action EIS.

### **c. Financial incentive to the manufacture of these systems in the US.**

We need to view this process as an opportunity for US economic development. No incentives for foreign ownership, production or labor should be given. In fact, it could be argued that we want to curtail the outsourcing of jobs. Tariffs and import taxes for equipment and services not originating in the US should be a order of high priority. In turn we need to encourage the creation of US based jobs so tax incentives should be built into legislation. This way we actually stimulate the economy with good, middle class manufacturing and engineering jobs. Companies will see the benefit of keeping the work at home.

## **2. Growing the necessary electrical grid for this new energy source.**

To ensure that as the US economy moves toward an electric based economy, the fundamental infrastructure needs to be in place. We will need to provide the same type of developmental protection for creation of a new national electrical grid. Foremost, we need to make sure that the new grid is scalable and secure. Electricity will eventually be the basis of all human mechanical manufacturing and travel, at this point we will need an extensive distribution grid. We will need legislation to meet the future needs of its construction.

## *Points to consider in the process*

### **a. Challenges on “Aesthetic Grounds”.**

This needs to be an area to protect power transmission companies as they build out the grid. They will be under constant threat of “Not in my backyard” lawsuits. A clear set of guide lines for installation and placing will speed this process to insure both quick growth but also provide protection for those who live along the paths of these new power line corridors. We will also need to put into place tax and legislative incentives to encourage underground installation of new transmission lines. We should also encourage other innovative designs to “beautify” installations. This will help mollify the feelings of those who have power transmission lines show up in their backyards.

### **b. Fast Track Environmental Impact Review. (EIS)**

The current grid infrastructure should be sufficient for initial implementation. However, as the adoption of the electric economy occurs, additional transmission capability will be needed. For this new capacity, there will be a need for fast track legislation. This could also be addressed with a Planned Action EIS process.

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## **c. Financial incentives for installing scalable, aesthetically pleasing lines**

This will be key for the public in that they will be giving up some control of the development process by limiting the ability to challenge the new lines. We, also, will need secure systems, as a result underground installations needs to be encouraged. There may need to be legislation to help companies through the EIS process. The acquisition of land for new installation, then turning that land into usable community property should also be part of the legislative agenda. This land can be new green belt park land with secured underground tunnels for utility purposes. The acquisition of these new power corridors should be a public process. Something like the process used when our infrastructure for a national railroad system was built could be considered. This was a model which built the national rail system in record time. This was exactly what a growing country needed.

## **3. Convert the future automobile fleet from petroleum to Natural Gas (NG) and Electric.**

This should be a simple task in comparison to the overhauling of the national electrical generation system. In reality most car companies have made or are currently making NG cars. Legislation, like California's, to require a percentage of the cars they sell to be low emissions vehicles would be simple. Already commercial fleets can be NG, this could be made an option for public purchase. Current Hybrid vehicles are paving the way for Plug in Hybrids and soon electric cars. These forces are already in action, all that needs to be done here is some Federal, legislative guidance. Sign posts on our path to the future, gently guiding the public in the direction we need to go.

### *Points to consider in the process*

#### **a. Legislate a clean air requirement that can be met via NG and Electric car adoption.**

This will open the way for car companies to feel comfortable with the expanded production of both NG and electric cars. The demand will be generated and the industry will step in with the supply. This is the simplest way to move our nation off oil, make it easier to go with clean vehicles.

#### **b. Give incentives for production and purchase low emission vehicles.**

#### **c. Create tax incentives for refueling stations, both home and commercial.**

#### **d. Encourage increased in-country production of NG through national energy development incentives.**

#### **e. As with wind generation, insist that all Low Emission vehicle production occur in the US.**

Pass tariffs on imported vehicles to make American-made vehicles more affordable. Again, the focus needs to be placed on in country production in order to stimulate the national economy.

Taking the above legislative actions will help move this country closer to energy independence. With the ever increasing cost of keeping oil supplies secure in the Middle East, this is a course of action that we have needed for over three decades. In fact, by taking these actions, we are actually going back to the path started by the Nixon and Carter administrations. If we had stayed on such a course then, we might not now be so entangled in Middle Eastern affairs. We might not also be suffering from an energy-induced economic slowdown. Finally we, as a nation, would have had 30 years of strong, production driven economic growth that would have made the past 20 years of equity based debt spending growth look puny in comparison. Our country would be in an economically stable state that would be unmatched in the world.

I would like an opportunity to meet with you and or your staff to present support material and discuss out how I might be able to help you. This issue is important to me and I am willing to devote my time and effort to help you in this important campaign. Please contact me as soon as possible so we can have a meeting regarding the issue of energy independence. I look forward to working with you on any legislation that achieves this goal and will make myself available to your campaign to help with other energy-related legislation on which you might now be working.