

February 7, 2011

Senator Mary Jo White
Senate Box 203021
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3021

Dear Senator White:

We are writing to urge you to eliminate the Tier 2 alternative energy sources from Act 213, the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act (AEPS). In November 2004, the Pennsylvania legislature passed the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act, to provide environmentally beneficial sources for electricity generation in the state. The portfolio contains both Tier 1 and Tier 2 energy source classifications. The Tier 1 energy sources include wind energy, solar energy, and geothermal, while Tier 2 energy sources are mostly waste materials from coal mines, residential refuse, and paper mills. According to the AEPS, by 2020, the state of Pennsylvania must get 8% of its energy from Tier 1 sources and 10% from Tier 2, which means that in an act promoting energy and environmental sustainability, traditional renewable energy sources account for less than 50% of the objective.¹ Also, the AEPS obscures the boundary between renewable and alternative energy sources and grants a rather important position to the utilization of dirty energy sources. By comparing the AEPS with similar acts in neighbor states and conducting a case study within the state, we believe that the inclusion of Tier 2 energy sources not only creates environmental concerns but also creates barriers in the development of renewable energy in Pennsylvania. Again, please consider eliminating Tier 2 energy sources from the AEPS.

States such as New York and Maryland have similar acts, entitled the Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS), and a brief comparison of the AEPS with these demonstrates the problem with the AEPS.² New York's RPS includes "Solar Water Heat, Photovoltaics, Landfill Gas, Wind, Biomass, Hydroelectric, Fuel Cells, CHP/Cogeneration, Anaerobic Digestion, Tidal Energy, Wave Energy, Ocean Thermal, Ethanol, Methanol, and Biodiesel," and these sources must account for 29% of the state's energy consumption by 2015.³ They are renewable sources due to their inexhaustibility in human time scale and relatively low emission of greenhouse gases compared to sources such as coal and waste incineration. Such energy sources are also renewable in the sense that they promote energy security, create jobs, benefit the environment, and ensure energy for future generations. To compete with other states in green energy development, it is also advantageous for Pennsylvania to invest in domestic wind energy. Pennsylvania is already behind New York in renewable energy objectives. At the same time, the Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland Interconnection (PJM), which is the electricity transmission organization that serves almost all of Pennsylvania, also plans to incorporate 50% of its energy supply from wind energy.⁴ Pennsylvania absolutely has the capacity to grow the renewable energy industry; the

¹ "Senate Bill No. 1030," The General Assembly of Pennsylvania, November 17, 2004, <http://www2.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/BI/BI/2003/0/SB1030P1973.pdf>

² *ibid*

³ "New York: Incentives/Policies for Renewables & Efficiency," Database of State Incentives for

Renewables & Efficiency, last reviewed December 10th, 2010, http://dsireusa.org/incentives/incentive.cfm?Incentive_Code=NY03R&re=1&ee=1

⁴ "Renewables Tomorrow," PJM,

<http://www.pjm.com/about-pjm/newsroom/renewable-dashboard/renewables-tomorrow.aspx>

