

Resolution Concerning Wind Energy & Public Health

(Author: National Wind Watch)

The following resolution to encourage studies of the health effects of wind turbines was submitted by Dr. Albert Aniel and Dr. Michael Nissenbaum and adopted by the Maine Medical Association at its Annual Meeting, Sept. 11-13, 2009. It was also adopted by the Maine Osteopathic Association board of directors on Sept. 25.

In 2011, the Maine Medical Association rescinded this resolution and their consequent "Wind Energy and Public Health" policy lest it be seen to conflict with their concomitant endorsement of large-scale wind development.

WHEREAS, proposals to locate and build wind energy facilities in the State have at times proven controversial, due to concerns regarding potential effects of such facilities on the public health; and

WHEREAS, the trade off between the public good of generating electricity and the adverse health effects warrant appropriate evidence-based scientific research; and

WHEREAS, assessing the potential health impact of wind turbines has been difficult to measure but if present would be of significant concern, and this is especially apparent regarding the noise level and other noise characteristics specific to industrial wind turbines; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for modification of the State's regulatory process for siting wind energy developments to reduce the potential for controversy regarding siting of grid-scale wind energy development and to address health controversy with regulatory changes to include, but not limited to:

- a. Refining certain procedures of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission to reflect scientific evidence regarding potential health effects and to further explore such potential health effects;
- b. Judging the effects of wind energy development on potential public health by avoiding unreasonable noise and shadow flicker effects, with development setbacks and incorporating up-to-date noise regulations specific for industrial wind turbines adequate to protect public health and safety;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Maine Medical Association work with health organizations and regulatory agencies to bring to the public's attention the scientific information of known medical consequences of wind development;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Maine Medical Association: 1) encourage performance of studies on health effects of wind turbine generation by independent qualified researchers at qualified research institutions; 2) ensure that physicians and patients alike are informed of evidence-based research results.

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