

November 24, 2009

To Sen. Johanns, Sen. Nelson and Congressman Smith:

I am writing to support the efforts by WNCC to develop a Wind Energy Initiative and provide a program for training that will complement the growing wind energy sector. The proposed offering at WNCC would provide a one year technical training program that would span two semesters.

There have already been over 40 individuals who have called and indicated strong interest in enrolling in such a program. It is critical to offer such a program in the Panhandle of Nebraska. The value of our community colleges in today's economic environment is unparalleled in modern times. The community college setting is a perfect venue for such training and renewable energy programs for training are critical.

I have worked within the renewable energy sector for nearly two decades and have seen much progress. However, the development and progress within this sector has been stilted by off-and-on funding and a lack of dedicated programs.

There are many facets to the renewable energy market. We have seen much development in solar, fuel cells, nanotechnology, wave, and wind energy. All will play a key role as we move forward as a nation to grow and benefit from renewable energy.

This country needs a serious program and commitment to renewable energy and wind energy is a prime opportunity in the Western Nebraska/Eastern Wyoming/Northeastern Colorado geographic footprint.

The upper Midwest/Rocky Mountain Region has been called the 'Saudi Arabia of Wind'. Given the tremendously favorable wind regimes found in this part of the United States, we would be particularly remiss if we do not seize this opportunity to grow this industry and provide the educational needs to support this industry.

I have been involved with developers of wind farms, transmission providers, landowners/farmers/ranchers all open to the leasing of their lands, governments and municipalities around the globe that have taken huge strides forward in the development of wind technologies and usage, wind turbine manufacturers, young and budding entrepreneurs with new ideas within the wind energy sector.

It is clear to me that without training programs such as the proposed at WNCC, the industry will be disjointed and unable to support the technical labor needs of an early stage growth industry that has the potential to lessen the dependence the USA has on foreign fossil fuels.

In my work in the energy sector over the past 35 years, I have seen the oil and gas industry struggle to meet our domestic needs. It has not been possible to date, however,

with combined efforts to further our full energy complex, we can win this 'war of economic turmoil' over energy resources by directing funding to renewable sectors.

I wholeheartedly support the efforts of WNCC and ask that you fully support the programs being presented to you on behalf of WNCC's training plans.

My regards,

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&

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T.E.S.S.S. Farms, Inc.-a farm/ranch corporation doing business in Western Nebraska for over 80 years