

(email sent to legislators, reprinted/published with permission)

I am a 7 year Rochester resident, working in wind energy development.

I am writing you to ask that you please do not support S.F. 3617, a tax break extension for the Phillips Biomass Plant.

I worked for two years with the Phillips Community Energy Cooperative. The co-op was a partner in this project from 2004-2006. We withdrew our participation when it became clear that the project should never happen, because the economics didn't work, and its fuel supply was inadequate.

The project has survived strictly on the charm and political connections of Michael Krause, the CEO of its developer, Kandiyohi Development Partners. Michael is an excellent spokesman, but that isn't enough to make a project like this work.

I am not surprised that Scott Dibble is pushing this bill. Scott was instrumental in getting LCCMR funds for the co-op for its share in the project. We ended up telling the LCCMR that our project was not a good use of those funds, because we didn't think that the project would ever happen, and we wanted to see the monies go somewhere that they could do some good.

Kandiyohi had an option agreement with the City of Minneapolis to purchase the site for the project. That option agreement is all but expired, because Kandiyohi was unable to achieve a power purchase agreement for the project during the two years of the option period.

Finally, Dibble is not the senator of the project's district. The residents of the community surrounding the project are soundly against it.

In short, this tax break is pork at its worst. Nor is it supported in the district where the project would be located (ask Karen Clark or Linda Berglin). It's a downtown developer trying to site a polluting power plant in a poor neighborhood. Why on earth would you give tax credits to a project like that? And why would you want to extend them when the project doesn't work?

For a bit of history about the project, this is good reading: <http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/node/8883#>

Kind regards,

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