

Prattsburgh Eminent Domain Public Hearing Remarks

by Jim Sawicki

Good evening. I would like to thank the Town Board of Prattsburgh and everyone here tonight for giving me the opportunity to speak with you.

I am a neighbor of Prattsburgh. My name is Jim Sawicki, and I own property in the town of Italy. So, it has come to this. Here we all are this evening faced with difficult issues. Thank goodness "American Idol's" season finale was last night or the turnout tonight could have been much worse! ;-)

How has it come to this? How has our once great country gone from a government "of, for and by" the people to one of corruption and greed that is now controlled by deep-pocketed corporations through their lobbying and special interest groups?

Rules and regulations originally put in place by our founding fathers made our country a shining example of democracy and our nation a world economic leader with a combination of true free trade policies and limited government regulation. America has been the place to be for quite a long time!

Unfortunately, times have changed for the worse. Not democratically, as originally intended by majority vote "of for and by the people", but through inappropriate judicial activism by robed judges legislating from the federal bench and corporate bullies through their lobbyists foisting their agendas on misguided politicians.

Now, rules and regulations originally put in place to ensure our rights as citizens have been amended, legislated and violated beyond our wishes into a shameful and wasteful government that is controlled by huge corporations. Many of these corporations are foreign. They have a seemingly endless money supply to lobby and influence our officials for their own benefit. Through their lobbying efforts, and other schemes, they convince our officials to enact laws and regulations to benefit themselves at great public expense and against public will. Through their questionable corporate schemes, they also influence decisions regarding our rights in courts of law. Sometimes a decision against our will is made by only one judge, or only a small three out of five majority votes by a town board. In a nation where our government was originally setup incredibly well to protect us, we now have to pay exorbitant legal fees out of our own pockets just to defend what is rightfully ours in the first place. This is madness, AND... this madness has to stop!

So here we are. Neighbor pitted against neighbor. Communities split apart. For what? For whom?

Maybe the State of NY? They have mandated by the year 2013 that 25% of our energy needs come from renewable sources. This is a noble goal. I would like to be a billionaire by the year 2013. This too is a noble goal but it is virtually impossible, just as it is virtually impossible for wind power to contribute any significant amount to the 25% goal set for the year 2013. In fact, NYSERDA (NY State Energy Research and Development Authority) released data that shows even if all the thousands of wind turbines that Industrial/commercial wind companies want to build do get built, they would contribute less than 2% of our state's energy needs.

So here we are. For what? For whom?

Maybe to reduce global warming and CO2 emissions? There is lots of hot rhetoric but very little cool reason here. Global warming is an issue onto itself and a discussion for another time.

Regarding the reduction of CO2 emissions:

Over twenty years of real data from around the world show that because of wind's unpredictable nature, wind power will not eliminate our dependence on coal, natural gas and nuclear powered plants. These sources for generating electricity must be available 24/7 to make up for wind's irregular patterns, so what is the benefit? (None.) How is this reducing CO2 emissions? (It is not.) Due to standby mode of these traditional electricity generators there may actually be more CO2 released into our atmosphere by installing wind turbines. In California, the commercial Wind Industries' actual production was so dismal that they lobbied the CEC (California Energy Commission) to not reveal their production records. A California resident said, "They have scraped miles and miles of desert, obliterated our views, rendered adjacent property valueless and impacted us with noise and dust for this miniscule amount of useless energy".

So here we are. For what? For whom?

Maybe to reduce our dependence on foreign oil? Did you know that only about 3% of our whole country's electricity is produced from oil? And, did you know that most of that 3% is from low-grade crude extracted from within the United States?

Last I checked, I still can't hook my car up to a wind turbine!

One of the first responses most folks give for why we should have wind farms is we need to become less dependent on foreign companies. So, even though wind farms will not reduce our oil use or our dependency on foreign oil, is it all right to let foreign companies add to their control of us by taking over our electricity generation AND distribution? This is totally illogical and ignorant!

So here we are. For what? For whom?

Perhaps to make sacrifices that will result in helping the common good and meet our ever insatiable energy needs?

Over twenty years of data from commercial wind turbines around the world show beyond a doubt that their production is small, highly variable and intermittent and yet their size, cost and sprawl are unreasonably huge. Industrializing more of our land and seascapes for wind energy does way more harm than good. It is not an environmentally wise choice. The real danger of allowing this folly of industrial/commercial wind power development to continue is that it is diverting our focus and resources including huge sums of all our money away from finding effective solutions to our energy needs.

So here we are. For what? For whom?

Are we here as a token gesture by the officials that have already made up their minds and may have conflicts of interest representing our public good and welfare? How sad.

Are we here tonight, where ultimately a single judge may decide against us to enjoy our properties in peace? Very sad, indeed.

Are we here tonight, and yet, a town board that includes members with conflicts of interest, may have already made up their minds to vote for us and tell us what we can or can not do with our properties? Unconscionable!!!

Let us not allow ourselves to be misled by questionable motives of corporations, their lobbyists, misguided politicians, officials and the media at great misuse of our resources for their sole gain.

Let us reunite and mend broken relations with our neighbors and our communities by not yielding to the corporate bullies and their misguided followers that have split us apart only for their huge financial gains. Let us return to living together in a community of peace and goodwill as we had all originally intended as a primary motive for living where we do.

Thank you.
Jim Sawicki

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