

Environment & Energy Committee Testimony on HB 1173 Light Mitigation  
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My name is Paul Krupin. I am a retired environmental protection specialist with a BA, MS, a well-used law degree, and over 40 years of work experience in the Pacific Northwest. I live in Kennewick Washington.

Wind energy is increasing and pilots flying aircraft at low altitudes at night rely on obstruction lights on wind turbines.

For many others, they are a disturbing eyesore and an invasive nuisance.

House Bill 1173 turns off the red flashing lights at night, unless they are needed to keep aircraft safe.

The lights need not be on all the time. Out of sight is out of mind.

Safe skies can be dark skies with light mitigation technology known as 'Aircraft Detection Lighting Systems' or ADLS.

This FAA-approved technology operates a lot like the motion sensors that automatically turn the lights on and off at WA DOT rest areas all across the state. How novel!

North and South Dakota, Vermont, New Hampshire – all require ADLS on wind energy projects.

Colorado, Minnesota, and Kansas have bills under consideration.

Federal, state, county and city government agencies routinely require ADLS on wind projects.

Using ADLS to reduce light pollution at night produces an enormous sense of relief to people near and far away from projects.

The Draft EIS for Horse Heaven Hills Project near the Tri-Cities is in public review with EFSEC right now.

This huge project, the largest wind farm proposed in the state of Washington, is nearly 30 miles across, with up to 244 – 499-foot high or 150 - 671-foot high turbines.

U.S. Census data from 2020 indicates this project will have a disproportionate impact on people who live in the Tri-Cities and in Benton County, compared to every other wind project in the state.

Benton County is the fastest growing county in Washington State.

Benton City, Richland, Kennewick, and Finley all have urban growth boundaries, with several hundred 3- to 5-acre plots, one to three miles from the project.

In addition, over 100,000 people live within six miles of the turbines, in numerous fast-growing, residential communities, mostly inside city limits.

This compares to about 19,000 people within 6 miles, for all the other projects in the state combined.

And the average number of people within six miles, for the nine counties with 33 wind projects in the state, is just over 2,100.

Instead of trees, 150 to 200, Space Needle size wind turbines, will be visible throughout the Tri-Cities, even from 10 to 20 miles away.

Over a quarter of a million people who live in Benton and Franklin Counties will have to see these turbines, day and night.

People in Tri-Cities are worried that visual impacts will harm their mental health, real estate values, the wine industry, and tourism.

House Bill 1173 can reduce the negative concerns people have. ADLS's improve the social acceptance of wind energy.

House Bill 1173 helps a growing ADLS industry. Wind farm operators concerned about costs often change their minds once they learn that the costs for ADLS are not prohibitive.

A new radar site costs \$1 to 2 million, plus additional infrastructure as necessary, which is barely noticed in the Capital Expense costs of a large project.

Cost savings are produced when the ADLS takes the wind out of the publics' most vocal concerns – the night-time visual impacts.

Reduced public opposition can save time and projects can derive benefits from reduced litigation, faster permitting, and improved public and community relations.

I believe House Bill 1173 is a win-win for all stakeholders. Safe skies can be dark skies.

Please support this bill and remember to turn the lights off when you leave tonight.

Thank You. Questions?