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Wind Association Blows Off Energy Plan

A leading wind energy association blew off the House-passed energy package today, saying the legislation would actually put \$2 billion in new investment in wind energy projects at risk.

In letters to Gov. Jennifer [GRANHOLM](#) and Senate Energy Policy Committee Chair Bruce [PATTERSON](#) (R-Canton), the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) urged the leaders to make a "fresh start" with annual renewable energy requirements much more aggressive than what passed the House two weeks ago (See "[House Passes Energy Package](#)," 4/17/08).

[HB 5548](#) and [HB 5549](#) dictate that 10 percent of the state's energy should come from renewable sources by 2015, but AWEA said the bills have so many "toothless enforcement provisions" the requirements really only require less than one-half of one percent of additional renewable energy by 2014.

The association said that in order to create a "nationally significant" market, the standard should be set in 2010 with 5 percent, ramping up 1 percent every year until the 10 percent by 2015 is set.

"The House legislation, as a package, cannot accurately be described as a renewable energy standard, and the public should not expect economic benefits to result from the package," the AWEA stated in its letter to Granholm and Patterson. "To avoid unwarranted market and public confusion created by opaque legislation, our industry asks for your assurance of a veto should such legislation reach your desk."

The Granholm administration showed no signs of scraping the House compromise for something brand new. Press Secretary Liz [BOYD](#) said a number of alternative energies has expressed support for the current legislation. While AWEA praised the recently passed Ohio renewable energy law, Boyd said the Buckeye State only called for 3.5 percent energy from renewable sources by 2015.

"We hope to persuade the AWEA to come on board in the Senate," Boyd said.

Joining the AWEA in today's press release were seven wind energy manufacturers that sought to put an exclamation point on their belief that the House package "fails to create a market of any significant size" and fails to give any incentive for manufacturers to build production facilities or create jobs in the state.

"Last week, Ohio Gov. Ted **STRICKLAND** signed legislation creating a real market for renewable energy in Ohio and aggressively positioning Ohio manufacturers to compete in the growing wind energy market," said AWEA Manager of State Legislation Hans **DETWEILER**. "It is not too late for Michigan to do the same."

The AWEA press release didn't get past the Customer Choice Coalition (CCC), which held up the press release as a reason the public should be skeptical of the House package, which guarantees DTE, Consumers Energy and other incumbent utilities at least 90 percent of the state's energy market.

"Consumers benefit when we have more competition, not less — and AWEA is asking for more competition, as does CCC," said CCC Spokesman David **WAYMIRE**.