

24 January 2005

Editor, the Times —

Now that the State lawmakers have convened in Charleston, I thought it might be appropriate to share with the readers of The Pendleton Times a recent letter I sent to Delegate Harold K. Michael.

### **An Open Letter to Harold K. Michael:**

Congratulations on your reelection. We in Pendleton County are deeply appreciative of the many ways you have been able to leverage your position and seniority on the House Finance Committee to help us secure additional monies for badly needed projects and programs. The school system is particularly indebted to you.

Pendleton County needs you help again, only this time it doesn't have a price tag. We need your help in preventing so-called "wind farms" from setting up shop and destroying the most important economic resource Pendleton County has – the incomparable landscape that forms the base for our tourism businesses and the vacation home – second home real estate market.

Proponents of wind farms have touted them as "clean and green" energy sources, when, in fact, they are unreliable and inefficient producers of energy, requiring all kinds of Federal and State tax breaks along with legislatively mandated artificial markets to give them any viability. They have been successful in the promotion of wind farms because money talks louder than facts, and the disillusionment with wind turbines that is now occurring in the European countries that were the early adopters of this technology has no voice to compete with the well-financed claims of "improved performance" by the foreign manufacturers of these turbines. They are intent on selling their wares to US wind development companies that are conveniently armed with tax breaks and guaranteed market share.

You can help your many friends and supporters in Pendleton County by sponsoring legislation to accomplish the following:

- Level the playing field so that wind electric generation plants pay the WV Business & Occupation Tax on the same basis as do other energy producers and not on the scrap value basis of the equipment
- Allow county assessors the authority to assess wind electric generation plants on a 20-year useful life depreciation schedule without regard to the accelerated depreciation allowed on Federal tax returns
- Go on record that the Finance Committee does not look favorably upon legislation that creates special financial incentives for private wind developers to operate in West Virginia.

I have heard from some that you may favor wind plants in West Virginia, and my response has been that Harold Michael is too good a friend of Pendleton County to support any project that would destroy the major asset our county has – its spectacular scenery. Maybe a wind plant fits the bleak landscape of Mt. Storm, but it surely doesn't have a place in Pendleton County. I would be pleased to meet with you or your staff to explain how industrial wind plants are not an economically or ecologically justifiable solution to atmospheric carbon-loading issues but just a cleverly disguised tax-dodge. I along with many other voters in Pendleton County look forward to your reply and will, with your permission, post it on [www.protectpendleton.com](http://www.protectpendleton.com)