

## Officials Move to Protect Cape Cod Project

*Kennedy doesn't want wind pylons on his backyard, he wants them on yours!*

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The Bush administration and two influential senators weighed in Friday against a provision that would block a 130-turbine wind farm off Cape Cod, where some of Washington's most powerful have vacation retreats.

The wind farm, which would be located in Nantucket Sound about six miles off shore, has been a focus of controversy for five years. Developers won favorable environmental reviews and hoped to have it completed in 2009.

A provision tucked into a bill authorizing activities for the U.S. Coast Guard would give Massachusetts' governor a veto over the project, although the turbines would be located in federal waters. Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney opposes the project.

Energy Undersecretary David Garman on Friday called the provision "unwise" at a time when President Bush and many members of Congress are trying to spur the development of wind turbines as an alternative for generating electricity.

The Republican chairman and the top Democrat of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee vowed to block the Coast Guard bill unless the provision is removed.

Sens. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., and Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., said interfering in the project in this way and at this late date would have a chilling effect on investments in renewable energy and conflicts with the need to develop alternative energy sources. "It sets a terrible precedent" to allow governors to veto such projects, Domenici said.

Sen. Ted Stevens (news, bio, voting record), R-Alaska, added the provision during negotiations with the House on a final version of the Coast Guard bill.

Stevens consulted with Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (news, bio, voting record), D-Mass., whose family retreat is eight miles from the proposed wind farm. Kennedy and other members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation oppose the project, but he has denied that personal considerations are involved.

Kennedy spokeswoman Melissa Wagoner said Kennedy views the project as "a sweetheart deal for a developer" and continues to oppose it. She said "he wasn't involved in crafting the language" in the Coast Guard bill but that he and Stevens discussed it. She said Kennedy long has maintained the governor should have a say on the project.

Aaron Saunders, a spokesman for Stevens, said the Alaska senator viewed it as a matter of state's rights. "He and Senator Kennedy spoke about the issue. Senator Kennedy expressed his opinions on them and Senator Stevens agreed."

"If this were a project off the coast of Alaska, he (Stevens) believes the citizens of Alaska should have a say on where that project should be located," Saunders said.

Cape Wind spokesman Mark Rodgers said the company has spent \$23 million so far, mostly on environmental reviews and permitting.

The turbines would stand 426 feet in shallow waters off an area of Nantucket Sound known as Horseshoe Shoal. Opponents argue that the turbines would be an eyesore and could threaten water navigation.

"A lot of people think the turbines are beautiful and elegant," Rodgers said. He said they would be six miles from the closest shore "and at that distance they would be (viewed as) a half an inch above the horizon."

Cape Wind estimates that the wind turbines would be able to supply three-fourths of the electricity used on Cape Cod and on the nearby islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard.

The Northeast region "has a demonstrated need for new sources of electricity to assure reliability of service and affordable electricity for the region's consumers, and this project will generate clean energy to help meet that need," Garman wrote in expressing the administration's support for the wind farm.