

**Lauren Nelson**

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**From:** Jeff Mehlhaff  
**Sent:** Monday, February 3, 2025 3:32 PM  
**To:** Lauren Nelson  
**Subject:** SB108 Fiscal Analysis

Sen. Nelson – You asked about fiscal analysis for SB108. There have been about 10 projects since 2009 that are between 50 and 99MW that would need to be sited based on the changes in the bill. Most years there are 0 projects. The PUC says they would need an additional FTE to help with these projects. The PUC would receive money from a filing fee with these types of projects. The filing fee will be based on the actual costs incurred by the PUC and could range from \$200,000 to \$400,000 depending on the time PUC staff put into the projects. The PUC staff put in 935 to 2,760 hours for these types of filings.

Let me know if you have further questions. Thanks.

Jeff

# This Red Midwestern State Is a Global Paragon of Clean Power

The economics of renewable energy help explain why it's thriving in so many places where it would seem unwelcome.

December 19, 2024 at 5:30 AM CST

If you're looking for a paragon of the renewable-energy transition, you won't find it in most of Europe or anywhere in China or even in California. It's a Midwestern US state known more for ethanol than for wind farms, which has voted for Donald "Green New Scam" Trump in three consecutive presidential elections.

That paragon is none other than Iowa, which last year generated roughly 61% of its electricity from wind and solar photovoltaic power (but mostly wind). A close runner-up is even deeper-red South Dakota, which went 63% for Trump in the latest election. Almost 56% of its electricity in 2023 was generated by wind turbines, which Trump has incorrectly claimed cause cancer.

The two states stood out in a recent report by the clean-energy think tank RMI, which divided the US, Europe and China into states, countries and provinces to highlight how some are switching to renewables much faster than others. The idea is that these places are

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# Trump signs executive order pausing wind turbine leases, could impact Midwest



**Elizabeth Weise**  
USA TODAY

Published 1:40 p.m. ET Jan. 21, 2025 | Updated 5:44 p.m. ET Jan. 21, 2025

President Donald Trump on Monday made good his promise to create policy "where no windmills are being built."

The executive order he signed Monday temporarily halts offshore wind energy lease sales in federal waters and pauses approvals, permits and loans for both offshore and onshore wind.

During the pause, officials will review the environmental impact of both onshore and offshore wind projects on wildlife and consider the "economic costs associated with intermittent generation" and the effects of subsidies on the viability of the wind energy industry, according to the executive order.

Land-based wind turbines currently produce 10% of the United State's electricity, according to American Clean Power, an industry group. The vast majority of those are built on private land.

A backlash against wind and solar power at the county level, often for aesthetic reasons, has meant that in 2023 a full 15% of U.S. counties had banned or blocked new, utility-scale wind or solar installations, a USA TODAY investigation found last year.

Today, wind energy is especially strong in the middle of the country, the so-called wind belt states that include North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Iowa, Oklahoma and Texas. In Texas, wind generates almost 29% of the state's energy.

Efforts to restrict onshore wind could be at odds with the current energy situation in those states.

"States voting for President Trump are eight of the top ten states in terms of reliance on wind power with many depending on wind for a significant share of their electricity use. Restricting wind development in these regions is certain to increase consumer energy bills," said American Clean Power Association CEO Jason Grumet in a statement.

## **Offshore wind is a tiny portion of US wind energy**

There are only three large-scale offshore wind projects currently producing energy but more than 20 are in various stages of permitting. Many coastal states which had opposed land-based wind farms were betting they could rely on offshore wind projects instead. That many be impossible under the Trump Administration.

Most of the offshore wind energy projects under consideration are being built on land leased from the federal government. In 2022, six companies agreed to pay a record-breaking \$4.37 billion for the right to build wind turbines more than three miles off the coasts of New York and New Jersey, a major milestone for U.S. renewable energy efforts. The money from the leases goes to the U.S. Treasury.

Because the federal government controls the waters off the U.S. coast, these leases are with the Department of the Interior rather than with the states whose coast they are near.

On the East Coast, vociferous opposition to offshore wind installations has sprung up, often due to claims that the wind turbines are an eyesore – though many of the projects are located so far off shore they are not readily visible. Other concerns include possible health risks and harm to wildlife.

Whales are also frequently cited as being harmed by offshore wind turbines, though there is no evidence that this is the case.

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## Cooperative serving South Dakota receives share of \$7.3 billion for rural clean energy projects

BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 12:39 PM



A wind turbine stands in a cornfield in southern South Dakota on Aug. 14, 2024. (Makenzie Huber, South Dakota Searchlight)

A rural electric cooperative serving South Dakotans is among 16 co-ops sharing in \$7.3 billion from the federal government for clean energy projects that President Joe Biden announced Thursday in Wisconsin.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative will apply its funding toward 1,400 megawatts' worth of renewable energy infrastructure in Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota. Estimated long-term member savings are over \$400 million. Plus, the project would

reduce greenhouse gasses – equivalent to removing 522,000 gasoline-powered cars annually from the road.

“Renewable generation is a key portion of our balanced approach to resource development,” said Basin Electric Power Cooperative CEO and General Manager Todd Brickhouse.

His comments were included in a news release from the federal government, which did not specify the amount of funding awarded to Basin. The cooperative did not immediately respond to a message from South Dakota Searchlight.

The funds come from the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, which included \$13 billion in rural electrification programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

That represents “the largest investment in rural electrification since 1936 and the New Deal,” Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack told reporters in a briefing Wednesday ahead of the announcement.



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The funds announced Thursday are under the USDA’s Empowering Rural America program, dubbed New ERA. Federal grants and loans are projected to seed another \$29 billion in private investment to produce more than 10 gigawatts of clean energy for rural communities – enough to power about 4 million homes according to one federal estimate.

The 16 power co-ops taking part serve residents in 23 states. The initiative will “bring the promise of clean energy and lower costs to about 5 million rural households, representing 20% of the nation’s entire rural households, as well as farms and businesses that are located in those 23 states,” Vilsack said.

Collectively, the co-ops are projected to add 4,500 jobs on top of 16,000 construction jobs, according to the USDA. The projects include 3,700 megawatts of wind power, 4,700 MW of solar power, 800 MW of nuclear power and 357 MW of hydropower.

“All of this is designed not only to provide more reliant electricity for those rural communities, but will also result in a 43.7-million-