



To: Interested Parties
From: Daniel J. Weiss, Senior Vice President, Campaigns, League of Conservation Voters
Re: **Iowa Ag Summit Presents Tough Choice on Wind Power**
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2015

The first-ever [2015 Iowa Ag Summit](#) is providing national political leaders a platform to discuss issues important to Iowa farmers. Because renewable energy provides economic benefits to many Iowans, many speakers and potential presidential candidates attending the event will be faced with an early, important choice: **Will these leaders stand with Iowa farmers, Sen. Chuck Grassley and Gov. Terry Branstad and call for an extension of the federal wind Production Tax Credit, or will they side with the Koch brothers in their vocal opposition to this important program?**

1. Wind Energy Significantly Benefits Iowa's Economy and Farmers

- Iowa generates [27% of its electricity from wind](#). With 106 wind projects on line and 3,438 turbines that have 5,177 MW of capacity, this is enough electricity to power 1.4 million homes annually.
- Iowa farmers [earned \\$15 million](#) in lease payments for wind turbines on their land in 2013.
- The wind industry supported up to [4,000 Iowa jobs](#).
- Iowa's wind electricity industry continues to grow, [increasing its capacity by 10%](#) from 2013 to 2014 and generating [13% more electricity](#) from wind in November 2014 than in November 2013.
- There is huge potential for continued growth due to Iowa's wind resources. Current installed wind capacity in Iowa is [10 percent of potential installed capacity](#).
- Wind energy projects also attract other major companies to invest in Iowa. In 2014, after [MidAmerican Energy Co. announced the state's largest wind project in](#) O'Brien County, Gov. Branstad noted that wind projects help Iowa attract companies from other industries, such as Microsoft and Google. [He said](#), "Major companies from across the country and around the world are looking at Iowa as a place to locate facilities due to our commitment to providing sustainable, affordable energy solutions."
- Wind energy is a hedge against higher fossil fuel prices. [Jonathan M. Weisgall](#), Vice President, Berkshire Hathaway Energy Co, noted that "We like wind because it is a hedge against fossil prices. We know the 30-year cost for our wind farms. You can't say the same for a gas plant."
- [A new report released today](#) by the Environmental Law and Policy Center documents that the entire supply chain for wind generated electricity creates jobs and benefits Iowa's economy.

2. The Production Tax Credit (PTC) is vital to the development of wind power to generate electricity.

The federal Production Tax Credit, authored by Sen. Grassley, [creates an incentive](#) for investments in wind generated electricity. The PTC expired on January 1, 2015, and its lapse can cause slowdowns in planned wind projects, as well as layoffs at wind energy companies and manufacturing facilities. The last time Congress didn't provide policy stability for wind power, wind installations dropped 92 percent the following year, causing the loss of nearly 30,000 well-paying jobs and \$23 billion in investment to our economy.

This detrimental boom and bust cycle creates market uncertainty that deters companies from making long-term investments. By contrast, fossil fuel tax provisions remain permanent fixtures in the tax code, which enables oil, gas, and coal companies to plan new projects with certainty. With stable, predictable tax credits, wind power will continue to lead us to a more secure, clean energy future that will benefit Iowa's farmers and the nation's economy.

3. Speakers at the Iowa Ag Summit face a stark choice between siding with Iowa's Republican leaders and the Koch Brothers.

Because of its significant benefits, [Senator Grassley](#), [Governor Branstad](#), [Rep. Steve King](#) and other [Iowa Republicans](#) strongly support renewal of the PTC. Iowans themselves have strongly voiced support for wind.

But an [organization funded by the oil billionaire Koch brothers](#), Americans for Prosperity, actively opposes renewal of the PTC.

- In 2015, Americans for Prosperity [urged senators](#) to oppose an amendment that would extend the PTC for five years.
- In late 2014, Americans for Prosperity announced a [six-figure print and digital ad campaign](#) in opposition to the PTC.
- Last year, [the Washington Post reported](#), "The Americans for Prosperity organization, partly founded and funded by the brothers who control Koch Industries, launched a newspaper advertising and grass-roots outreach effort after the election asking more than 20 Republican House members to halt the tax break for wind energy that is included in a package of tax extensions."
- Americans for Prosperity led a coalition effort to kill the PTC. In 2014, Americans for Prosperity [released a letter](#) from 117 organizations to pressure Congress to end the PTC.

Speakers at the Summit will have to decide whether the political price of opposition to this popular and important economic incentive for farmers and small businesses outweighs the potential financial benefit of the Koch brothers millions of campaign dollars. And while this weekend's summit provides the first opportunity to express their views on the PTC for Iowans, this question is sure to resurface throughout the year as Congress debates its renewal.