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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **WIND GROUPS DISMAYED WITH COURT RULING**

Grey Highlands/Plympton-Wyoming – Two citizen's groups, situated hundreds of kilometres apart in Ontario, who are both opposed to wind turbine developments, are disappointed with the decision of the Superior Court in London released on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016, to confirm the decisions made by the Environmental Review Tribunals (ERT) on their respective wind projects. The two groups had joined forces to appeal their respective ERT decisions.

Gary Fohr of Grey Highlands stated one of the concerns. "The Green Energy Act puts the burden of proof on citizens to prove that wind turbines are harmful. We were asking the court to consider that wind turbines have never been proven safe. There is no scientific evidence to support the government's claim that industrial wind turbines do not cause harm."

The groups appealed based on the ruling made by the Divisional Court in an earlier case, (Dixon). In that decision the court stated: "There is a difference between a negative determination that serious harm to human health has not been proven and a positive determination that engaging in the renewable energy project in accordance with the renewable energy approval will not cause serious harm to human health. Although no party raised as an issue on these appeals the failure of the Tribunal to confirm the decisions of the Directors, it is important that a tribunal follow its statutory mandate."

We interpret that to mean the Tribunals are required to confirm that the evidence presented at the hearing provides proof that there will be **no** harm to human health.

At the Fohr ERT hearing, an expert medical witness for the project developer acknowledged that the current scientific evidence is insufficient to prove that wind projects will not harm nearby residents, and that additional scientific study is still needed in that regard.

In effect, the provincial government has been approving wind projects without definitive scientific evidence that the projects will NOT cause harm.

We believe this is not in keeping with the intent of the Environmental Protection Act which requires the developer for any non-renewable project, such as a mine or cement plant, to provide definitive proof that their project will not harm human health or

the environment. Only in the case of renewable energy projects is the onus reversed; the residents must prove serious harm before the project can be stopped.

Many people living close to turbines continue to complain about adverse health effects. The scientific evidence is growing to support their claims. Apathy is turning to empowerment, as affected residents are encouraged to organize together and speak with one voice.

We're not against renewable energy, but we believe such projects should NOT be located where they will cause serious disturbances and adverse health effects to nearby residents in their homes. This is not acceptable collateral damage, and it's unfortunate this has to be such a painful lesson.

While we're disappointed with this decision, we are not discouraged from our ongoing efforts to advocate for the responsible implementation of these projects.

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