

# Congressman says wind project by shoreline could jeopardize base in Niagara Falls

Press Release, Congressman Chris Collins Posted 9 December 2015

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Congressman Chris Collins (NY-27) today released the following statement after writing a letter to Department of Defense and Federal Aviation Administration officials expressing concern over a proposed wind turbine project along the Lake Ontario shoreline.

“Protecting the military missions and jobs supported by the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS) is my main priority,” said Congressman Collins. “The proposed wind turbine project along the Lake Ontario shoreline has the potential to jeopardize the base’s operations and viability. Any project that puts the base’s future at risk is unacceptable. NFARS has survived a number of closure attempts, and I will continue to do everything in my power to guarantee its doors remain open.”

Full text of the letter is below.

December 8, 2015

Mr. John Conger Ms. Elizabeth Ray  
Deputy Under Secretary Vice President  
Department of Defense Mission Support Services  
Installations and Environment Federal Aviation Administration  
3400 Defense Pentagon 800 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, D.C. 20303 Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Mr. Conger & Ms. Ray,

I am writing you to share my concerns with a proposed project in my district. I recently received a letter from the Niagara Military Affairs Council (NIMAC) regarding a proposal by APEX Clean Energy to construct wind turbines along the shoreline of Lake Ontario. I have included the letter for your reference. This letter raises serious concerns with the potential

project and its proximity to the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS) military operating area.

NFARS was established in 1955 and is home to the Air Force Reserve Command's 914th Airlift wing, the 328th Airlift Squadron, and the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing. Currently, the Air Force Reserves flies the C-130 mission and the Air National Guard has taken on the Remotely Piloted Aircraft mission. NFARS employs nearly 3,000 service members and civilians and provides economic growth and stability to the Niagara County and its surrounding communities.

If approved, the APEX Clean Energy proposal would put 70 wind turbines that stand 600 feet tall along the shores of Lake Ontario, in close proximity to the base. Encroachment is one of many key factors the military uses when determining the future of a base. Currently, NFARS is ranked favorably in that area and we cannot afford to allow any project to move forward that would jeopardize its future.

We have serious concerns that these wind turbines will impede the current airspace, making the base less viable for future missions. In 1995, the base was reviewed for closure during a Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC). It was again reviewed for closure in a 2005 BRAC, and again in 2012 during the US Air Force Structure Adjustment. With an ever-present BRAC threat to the base and talks of another round in the next few years, we cannot risk these wind turbines jeopardizing the future of the Base and all those who are supported by it.

We must ensure that the future of the base remains viable and that any proposed projects do not interfere with its radar and flight operations. I am asking that before any decision is made, both the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Defense complete a thorough study of any potential impacts these structures would have on current and future operations at NFARS.

Sincerely,

CHRIS COLLINS  
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Andrew Cuomo, Governor of New York