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May 30, 2012

The Honorable Jon Tester
Senator
United States Senate
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable James Risch
Senator
United States Senate
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Udall
Senator
United States Senate
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0608

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senator
U.S. Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Dean Heller
United States Senate
U.S. Senate
361a Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senators Tester, Reid, Risch, Heller and Udall:

We are writing to express our support for the Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act (S. 1775), as introduced in the Senate. Among other things, this bill would share royalties and lease revenues from solar and wind projects developed on Federal lands with states and counties.


We support the development of a leasing system for renewable energy that returns a portion of royalty revenues to the states and counties because they incur additional staff time and capital costs from permitting and siting this type of development. Congress recognized this increased burden in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C 15873(a)), when it created a revenue sharing provision for geothermal energy generation on federal lands. As a result state and local governments in affected areas have been able to deliver critical governmental services and make needed capital improvements to accommodate the development.

We also support the development of new renewable energy in areas that have the least impact on wildlife and other important land uses. We believe a portion of the royalties from renewable energy development should be shared with state agencies to support land, wildlife and water conservation in affected areas. The region's hunting heritage, outdoor recreation opportunities and tourism economies would benefit from this.

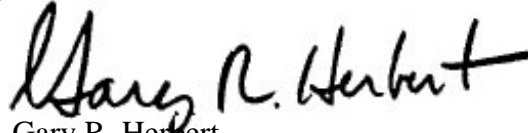
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Thank you for championing this important legislation. We hope that these concepts are federally codified. Our states look forward to helping meet the energy needs of the United States while ensuring that our state and local citizens are equipped to do so most effectively, and our prized land, wildlife and water resources are sustained.

Sincerely,



Christine O. Gregoire
Governor, State of Washington
Chair



Gary R. Herbert
Governor, State of Utah
Vice Chair