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March 26, 2013

The Honorable Jon Tester
United States Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Tester:


We are writing to express our support for sharing with states and counties renewable energy royalty revenues from federal lands. The language contained in the Public Land Renewable Energy Development Act (S. 279) which you have introduced in the Senate would enact such revenue sharing.

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.

Western Governors support continued and accelerated deployment of renewable energy projects, and associated clean energy job growth, in our states. In siting renewable energy projects and transmission lines, we encourage areas be developed which will have the least impact on wildlife and other important land uses. Shared royalties from renewable energy development can be used by state agencies to support land, wildlife, and water conservation in affected areas.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation. We hope these concepts are federally codified. Western states look forward to helping meet the energy needs of the United States while ensuring land, wildlife and water resources are adequately protected.

Sincerely,


Gary R. Herbert
Governor, State of Utah
Chairman, WGA


John Hickenlooper
Governor, State of Colorado
Vice Chairman, WGA

The Honorable Jon Tester

March 26, 2013

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cc: The Honorable Dean Heller
 The Honorable Mark Udall
 The Honorable Tom Udall
 The Honorable James Risch
 The Honorable Martin Heinrich
 The Honorable Max Baucus
 The Honorable Michael Bennet