



ASB Committee <asbprovcommittee@gmail.com>

RE: Considering Municipal zoning and development bylaws in Renewable Energy projects

1 message

AU Minister <AU.Minister@gov.ab.ca>

Tue, Apr 4, 2023 at 2:59 PM

To: ASB Committee <asbprovcommittee@gmail.com>

Cc: AGRIC Minister <AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca>, Minister of Energy <Minister.Energy@gov.ab.ca>

Dear Mr. Dutrisac:

The development of renewable energy projects on agricultural land is an important issue in Alberta as the impacts cut across electricity development, agriculture, municipalities, and private landowners. I appreciate your frustrations regarding appropriate weed and vegetation control for these projects, especially in light of the significant wind and solar development currently occurring in the province.

The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) covers the area in which much of the wind and solar development is currently occurring. The SSRP recognizes the importance of both agricultural production and renewable energy in the region but does not address these specific issues.

As you are aware, the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) is exempt from the requirement to align decisions with municipal statutory plans, per the *Municipal Government Act*. However, the AUC is responsible to ensure that municipalities and affected landowners are provided the opportunity to participate in the project review process. The AUC has indicated it would appreciate having the municipal perspectives presented and welcomes increased participation by municipal governments.

Some municipalities have expressed concerns and would like to see legislation changed to ensure their municipal plans are respected. I do not want to understate the challenges for both municipalities and the provincial government relating to this issue, as limiting development options for private landowners may be perceived as an infringement on property rights. Respecting property rights is a tenet of this government and any actions that may eliminate a potential source of revenue for a landowner must be carefully weighed against the potential benefits.

I would like to thank you for bringing this issue forward. I expect it will be the subject of further discussion this year and welcome further input and suggestions from rural municipalities and private landowners.

Sincerely,

Matt Jones

Minister