



Fueling the Opposition

How Fossil Fuel Interests Are Fighting to Kill Wind and Solar Farms Before They Are Built

David Anderson
July 2024



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***The Energy and Policy Institute** is a watchdog organization working to expose attacks on renewable energy and counter misinformation by fossil fuel and utility interests. It does not receive funding from for-profit corporations or trade associations.*

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Executive Summary

The Energy and Policy Institute (EPI) has been working for more than ten years to research and document how fossil fuel interests are fighting to block new wind and solar farms by spreading disinformation about clean energy to try to undermine the strong, bipartisan support for renewable energy that exists among the public.

In this report, EPI reviews and summarizes key findings from this research in one place for the first time. We identify some of the major players involved in disinformation campaigns targeting renewable energy projects and technologies, including:

- Funders from the coal, petroleum, and methane gas industries;
- Networks of front groups and political operatives paid by these fossil fuel interests; and
- The cadre of top anti-wind and anti-solar activists who have coordinated closely with these front groups and operatives for over a decade

This report helps to answer frequently asked questions about the role the fossil fuel industry has played in stoking opposition to renewable energy projects and comes at a time when many of these same opponents are escalating their attacks and seeking to derail the Inflation Reduction Act's historic investment in renewables.

Introduction

A national political network that's funded by fossil fuel interests is fighting to block renewable energy projects

The [State Policy Network](#) (SPN), a nonprofit that sits atop a 50-state network of think tanks and associated advocacy groups, [recently announced](#) that it will focus on working with state lawmakers in 2024 to prevent states from adopting renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.¹ SPN organizations frequently receive funding from fossil fuel interests, right-wing donors, and donor-advised funds that help conceal the origins of a considerable amount of the money that flows into the network.

The announcement came after SPN think tanks like the [Caesar Rodney Institute](#) and [Texas Public Policy Foundation](#) had already spent years fighting to block the deployment of renewable energy resources like offshore wind. Still, the move marks a surprisingly public shift in legislative priorities for a network that traditionally framed its opposition to renewable energy mandates and subsidies as being based on principles of limited government.

The move may be sparking dissension within SPN's ranks. The Show-Me Institute, a SPN think tank in Missouri, came out against a bill that would impose new siting limits on solar farms in the state, albeit while criticizing solar.

"Nonetheless, interfering in the free market and banning the sale of land for solar energy projects seems like a step too far," Avery Frank, a policy analyst for the Show Me Institute, said of the anti-solar siting bill in a [blog post](#).² "While there are ample concerns with solar energy, why is the state government limiting property rights and picking winners and losers in the energy market?"

EPI previously documented SPN's campaigns against state renewable energy standards for electric utilities and net metering policies that support the growth of rooftop solar in in-depth reports that [covered 2013-14](#) and [2015](#).³

¹Anderson, David. "Blocking renewable energy is a top state legislative priority for network of pro-fossil fuels think tanks." *Energy and Policy Institute*, March 26, 2024. <https://energyandpolicy.org/state-policy-network-anti-wind-solar-power/>

² Frank, Avery. "Limiting Solar Farming?" *Show Me Institute*, March 18, 2024. <http://showmeinstitute.org/blog/energy/limiting-solar-farming/>

³ "Attacks on Renewable Energy Policy by Fossil Fuel Interests 2013-2014." *Energy and Policy Institute*, May 2014. <https://energyandpolicy.org/attacks-on-renewable-energy-policy-by-fossil-fuel-interests-2013-2014/>; Elsner, Gabe and Matt Kasper. "Attacks on Renewable Energy Policies in 2015." *Energy and Policy Institute*, 2015. <https://energyandpolicy.org/renewable-energy-state-policy-attacks-report-2015/>

Following the money from the fossil fuel industry

The latest annual tax reports filed by the network of nonprofits controlled by Charles Koch [continue to show millions of dollars](#) going to SPN groups and other organizations involved in anti-renewable energy campaigns.⁴ Koch is the billionaire CEO and chairman of [Koch Industries](#), which profits from multiple sectors of the fossil fuel industry, but Koch Industries is just one part of the story.

EPI's research exposed longtime gas industry executives Karen Buchwald Wright and Tom Rastin, whose family owns the gas compressor manufacturer [Ariel Corporation](#), as the backers of multiple entities involved in anti-renewables efforts in states like [Ohio](#) and [Michigan](#).⁵ An [unredacted list of SPN donors obtained by EPI](#) shows Wright also contributed \$700,000 to SPN in 2019 alone, making Wright one of SPN's four largest listed donors that year.⁶ The couple did not respond to an email from EPI seeking comment on the funding.

EPI found \$750,000 in contributions to the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) in [annual IRS Form 990s filed by the foundation of Joseph Craft](#), the CEO and chairman of fossil fuel producer [Alliance Resource Partners](#), for the years 2020-2022.⁷

TPPF also received just over \$2 million since 2011 from the [Brigham Family Foundation](#), which is led by Ben "Bud" Brigham of the Brigham Exploration Company, an oil and gas company based in Texas.⁸ \$837,000 of that money has been earmarked for TPPF's [Life:Powered Initiative](#), a pro-fossil fuels and anti-renewable energy campaign, in the Brigham Family Foundation's annual tax filings since 2017.⁹

Joseph Craft and Bud Brigham did not respond to emails from EPI seeking comment on their foundations' funding of TPPF.

In a sign that some fossil fuel companies are feeling more emboldened in their opposition to renewables in today's polarized political environment, Consol Energy is now publicly [sponsoring](#)

⁴ Armiak, David. "Charles Koch's 'Stand Together' Donor Conduits Move \$176 Million into his Network, Higher Education, and Right-Wing Policy, Advocacy, Litigation, and Media Groups in 2022." *Exposed by CMD*, December 20, 2024.

<https://www.exposedbycmd.org/2023/12/20/charles-kochs-stand-together-donor-conduits-move-176-million/>

⁵ Kowalski, Kathiann M. "Anonymously funded group stokes local opposition to Ohio solar project." *Energy News Network*, December 18, 2023.

<https://energynews.us/2023/12/18/anonymously-funded-group-stokes-local-opposition-to-ohio-solar-project/>; Allnutt, Brian. "Solar siting ballot initiative short signatures for 2024." *Planet Detroit*, May 28, 2024.

<https://planetdetroit.org/2024/05/solar-siting-ballot-initiative-short-signatures-for-2024/>.

⁶ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax." *State Policy Network*, 2019

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24484881-state-policy-network-irs-form-990-for-2019-with-donors-listed>.

⁷ "Form 990-PF Return of Private Foundation." *Joseph W. Craft III Foundation*, forms covering fiscal years 2020-2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/731514539>

⁸ "Form 990-PF Return of Private Foundation." *Brigham Family Foundation*, forms covering fiscal years 2011-2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/452457442> and

https://apps.irs.gov/pub/epostcard/cor/452457442_201906_990PF_2021102919121160.pdf.

⁹ Anderson, Dave. "Video shows FERC nominee Bernard McNamee's bias against renewable energy." *Energy and Policy Institute*, November 20, 2018. <https://energyandpolicy.org/video-trump-ferc-nominee-fossil-fuels/>.

the “Not So Fast” campaign resisting the rapid transition from coal and gas to renewables.¹⁰ The new campaign features a [website](#) with the blunt name thecoalhardtruth.com and related social media channels.¹¹

Earlier research by EPI helped to reveal how [Cloud Peak Energy](#), [Murray Energy](#), and [Peabody Energy](#) secretly funded multiple groups that deny established climate science and spread disinformation about renewables, based on mandatory disclosures these major coal producers had to make in their bankruptcy case.¹² EPI also [uncovered over \\$1 million in Murray Energy payments](#) to an Ohio law firm involved in opposing multiple renewable energy projects.¹³

We [showed how](#) ExxonMobil, Kinder Morgan, and Occidental Petroleum quietly backed the Texas Industrial Energy Consumers opposition to American Electric Power’s plan to bring power from its North Central Wind Energy project to Texas before the Texas Public Utilities Commission.¹⁴ While that project moved forward without Texas’s support, [TIEC had previously helped to kill AEP’s major Wind Catcher](#) project on behalf of U.S. Steel, which has several subsidiaries involved in the coal industry.¹⁵

EPI was the [first to begin to expose](#) the secret money trail between the coal-burning utility [FirstEnergy](#) and Samuel Randazzo, a longtime attorney and lobbyist for the Industrial Energy Users-Ohio and anti-renewables activists in the Buckeye State.¹⁶ Randazzo was later indicted on multiple [state](#) and [federal criminal charges](#) in connection with millions of dollars he secretly received from FirstEnergy before his appointment as chairman of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio and Ohio Power Siting Board in 2019.¹⁷ New evidence continues to emerge in ongoing court cases and related regulatory investigations following Randazzo’s recent suicide.

¹⁰ Consol Energy. “‘Not So Fast’ Campaign Launched to Inform Americans about the Current and Future Roles of Coal.” *PR Newswire*, November 14, 2023. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/not-so-fast-campaign-launched-to-inform-americans-about-the-current-and-future-roles-of-coal-301986788.html>.

¹¹ Consol Energy. “The world is rushing to renewable sources of energy.” *The Coal Hard Truth*, 2024. <https://thecoalhardtruth.com/>.

¹² Fang, Lee. “Bankrupt Coal Company Funded Climate Change Denialism.” *The Intercept*, May 16, 2019. <https://theintercept.com/2019/05/16/coal-industry-climate-change-denial-cloud-peak-energy/>; Friedman, Lisa. “A Coal Baron Funded Climate Denial as His Company Spiraled Into Bankruptcy.” *The New York Times*, December 17, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/17/climate/murray-energy-climate-denial-coal.html>; Kasper, Matt. “Peabody Energy Funding Climate Denial.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, July 11, 2016.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/peabody-energy-funding-climate-denial-anti-renewable-energy/>.

¹³ Anderson, Dave. “Murray Energy paid over \$1 million to law firm that’s fought renewable energy.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, updated on September 17, 2020. <https://energyandpolicy.org/murray-energy-renewable-energy/>.

¹⁴ Anderson, Dave. 2020. “ExxonMobil attacks wind power, carbon tax in Texas.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, July 6, 2020. <https://energyandpolicy.org/exxonmobil-opposes-wind-power-project/>.

¹⁵ Anderson, Dave. 2019. “Attacks on wind and solar power by the coal and gas industries.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, Feb. 19, 2019. <https://energyandpolicy.org/attacks-renewable-energy/>.

¹⁶ Anderson, Dave. “Samuel Randazzo: PUCO candidate is an opponent of renewable energy.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, Jan. 28, 2019. <https://energyandpolicy.org/samuel-randazzo-puco/>.

¹⁷ McCorkle, Bethany. “Former PUCO Chairman, Former FirstEnergy Executives Indicted on Public Corruption Charges.” *Ohio Attorney General*, February 12, 2024. <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/February-2024/Former-PUCO-Chairman-Former-FirstEnergy-Executives>; Anderson, Dave. “Who’s who in former PUCO chairman Samuel Randazzo’s indictment?” *Energy and Policy Institute*, Dec. 4, 2023. <https://energyandpolicy.org/samuel-randazzo-indictment/>.

Front groups for the fossil fuel industry have been coordinating with anti-renewables activists for well over a decade

Many of the arguments espoused today by anti-renewables activists can be traced back to the fossil fuel industry's disinformation campaigns against climate science and global action to limit greenhouse gas emissions during the 1990s.

One example is a 1997 paper, "[Renewable Energy: Not Cheap, Not 'Green,'](#)" authored by [Institute for Energy Research](#) (IER) president Robert L. Bradley and published by the Cato Institute.¹⁸ Both [IER](#) and [Cato](#) have deep ties to the Koch network.¹⁹ Lisa Linowes, today a top anti-renewables activist, [described](#) Bradley's work as a "seminal policy paper" a decade later in 2007 on her website [windaction.org](#).²⁰

Tom Tanton, an energy consultant who worked with fossil fuel industry front groups like IER, the [Heartland Institute](#), and [American Tradition Institute](#) began to [cultivate relationships](#) with [anti-wind activists](#) by the 2000s.²¹

What emerged was a tight-knit network of anti-renewables diehards who can't exactly be described as Not in My Backyard (NIMBY) activists because they oppose *all* wind farms, regardless of location.

One Ohio-based anti-wind activist, [Tom Stacy](#), eventually became a paid consultant for IER and the coal industry. Tanton still lists "friend" of Save Western Ohio (Stacy's old anti-wind group) as his professional experience for 2009 on his [LinkedIn profile](#).²² Stacy co-founded the Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions and currently sits on the board of directors for the National Wind Watch, both clearinghouses for information utilized by anti-renewables activists nationally.

Other anti-renewables activists claim to be unpaid for their efforts, but have not been shy about publicly partnering with groups that do receive fossil fuel money:

- [John Droz](#), the co-founder of the Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions, a group that provides model local laws, strategic guidance, and information to anti-wind and solar activists, has held the title of fellow at the coal industry-backed [American Tradition Institute](#). Droz has also [been a regular contributor to IER's blog MasterResource since](#)

¹⁸ Bradley, Jr., Robert L. "Renewable Energy: Not Cheap, Not 'Green.'" *Cato Institute*, August 27, 1997. <https://www.cato.org/policy-analysis/renewable-energy-not-cheap-not-green>.

¹⁹ "Institute for Energy Research / American Energy Alliance." *Energy and Policy Institute*. <https://energyandpolicy.org/institute-for-energy-research-american-energy-alliance/>; "Cato Institute." *DeSmog*. <https://www.desmog.com/cato-institute/>.

²⁰ Lisa, Linowes. "Bradley's take on wind power." *windAction*, December 17, 2007. <https://www.windaction.org/posts/12425>.

²¹ "Our Own Photo Gallery." *We Oppose Wind farms*, December 1, 2009. <https://web.archive.org/web/20210418034430/https://we-oppose-windfarms.tripod.com/id4.html#>; Anderson, Dave. "Tom Stacy: A top anti-wind activist got paid by a fossil fuel funded group." *Energy and Policy Institute*, April 12, 2018. <https://energyandpolicy.org/tom-stacy-anti-wind-activist/>.

²² "Tom Tanton." *LinkedIn*. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tom-tanton-b364464/>.

- [2009](#) and is a member of the [CO2 Coalition](#), a climate skeptic group with a decades long record of accepting money from the fossil fuel industry.²³
- [Lisa Linowes](#), who currently helms the Industrial Wind Action Group, Save Right Whales Coalition, and Wildlife, Energy & Community Coalition, [joined IER's newly formed advisory committee in 2018](#).²⁴ Linowes, whose work and writings have been [promoted by IER on MasterResource since 2010](#), also served as a senior fellow at TPPF, where she authored two anti-wind reports.²⁵
 - [Kevon Martis](#), the driving force behind the Michigan-based anti-renewables groups Interstate Informed Citizens Coalition and Our Home Our Voice, has been listed as a [fellow at the Energy & Environmental Legal Institute](#) (previously known as the American Tradition Institute) since 2016.²⁶ IER has also [featured Martis's writings and efforts on MasterResource since 2012](#).²⁷ Martis is now the public face of Citizens for Local Choice, a ballot initiative which seeks to overturn Michigan's new law streamlining renewable energy siting, and [received money](#) from a longtime gas industry executive in Ohio.²⁸

These anti-renewables activists and the fossil fuel industry funded groups with whom they've teamed up represent some of the most prolific sources of information and strategies used by NIMBY activists in fights against wind and solar farms all over the country.

Opponents allied with the fossil fuel industry seek to use a mix of disinformation, litigation, exclusionary siting and zoning laws and ordinances, and moratoria and bans to block deployment of renewables. Opposition to renewable energy is also being fueled by the spread of disinformation and conspiracy theories online.

Local residents who choose to lease their land for wind and solar farms are often villainized by project opponents. In South Carolina, state law enforcement officials are [investigating death threats](#) received by members of the York County Council for supporting the construction of a solar panel factory.²⁹

²³ "Search Results for: 'droz.'" *MasterResource*.

https://www.masterresource.org/?s=droz&orderby=post_date&order=ASC;

²⁴ Amsberry, Erin. 2018. "IER Welcomes Five Energy Experts to Join Newly Created Advisory Council." *Institute for Energy Research*, December 18, 2018.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190613151506/https://www.instituteforenergyresearch.org/uncategorized/ier-welcomes-five-energy-experts-to-join-newly-created-advisory-council/>.

²⁵ "Search Results for: 'linowes.'" *MasterResource*.

https://www.masterresource.org/?s=linowes&orderby=post_date&order=ASC

²⁶ Richardson, Craig. "Release: Kevon Martis Joins E&E Legal as Senior Policy Fellow." *Energy & Environment Legal Institute*, April 14, 2016.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20230209223623/https://eelegal.org/release-kevon-martin-joins-ee-legal-as-senior-policy-fellow/#>.

²⁷ "Search Results for: 'martis.'" *MasterResource*.

https://www.masterresource.org/?s=martis&orderby=post_date&order=ASC

²⁸ Allnutt, Brian. "Dark money donation raises Michigan campaign finance alarms." *Planet Detroit*, March 28, 2024.

<https://planetdetroit.org/2024/03/donations-from-dark-money-nonprofit-michigan-farm-bureau-raise-concern-in-michigans-solar-siting-ballot-campaign/>.

²⁹ Stancil, Lamaur. "State investigating death threats regarding Silfab Solar in Fort Mill." *The Post and Courier*, July 17, 2024.

https://www.postandcourier.com/rock-hill/news/death-threats-trump-solar-silfab-fort-mill-letters/article_cee94c30-4391-11ef-8686-c7e061a85e39.html.

People who are skeptical of renewable development, but independent of the fossil fuel industry – who may have legitimate concerns about how a wind or solar farm may impact views, wildlife, agricultural lands, and other aspects of their communities – may be more open to public education, dialogue, and reasonable compromises that allow projects to move forward. Public input can even result in improvements to project plans, such as the [addition of innovative agrivoltaics approaches](#) that enable dual use of land for agriculture and solar power generation.³⁰

Foes of renewables allied with the fossil fuel industry [tend to support](#) the expansion of coal, gas, and oil extraction and infrastructure, and [oppose what they call government mandates](#) aimed at limiting the environmental and public health impacts of fossil fuels.³¹ Local residents whose concerns about a particular renewable energy project are based on values like conservation, by contrast, often support wind and solar power in general and may be concerned about problems like climate change that are caused by fossil fuels.

Renewables opponents who are paid by the fossil fuel industry sometimes pose as NIMBY activists. For example, a media outlet owned by Metric Media, which is known for its right-wing bias, [reported](#) that the emcee of an anti-solar town hall meeting in Ohio was a local farmer.³² A local journalist soon [revealed](#) that the emcee was actually a chief strategist for a political consulting firm that worked for a front group for the gas industry.³³

Public opinion research has long shown deep distrust of the oil and gas industry among the public. A new [national labs survey](#) shows that people living near solar farms trust project neighbors, nonprofit and community organizations, and universities more than other sources for information about energy projects.³⁴ Exposing the money behind fossil fuel industry front groups and political operatives who pose as NIMBY activists, think tanks, and experts is a critical step to helping the public know disinformation when they see it.

The forces aligned against renewables are powerful but not immune to public scrutiny and accountability, which is why fossil fuel interests generally seek to hide their support. For example, a spokesperson for The Empowerment Alliance once [told a reporter](#) that the pro-gas and anti-renewables group won't disclose its funders because its donors don't want to face public protests.³⁵

³⁰ Foxhall, Emily. "Sheep find a home on Texas solar farms as "agrivoltaics" gain popularity." *The Texas Tribune*, October 27, 2023. <https://www.texastribune.org/2023/10/27/texas-solar-farm-sheep-agrivoltaics/>.

³¹ Kevon, Martis. "Commentary: Natural Gas Plants Better Than Wind Turbines." *Michigan Capitol Confidential*, March 12, 2013. <https://www.michiganconfidential.com/18396>; Anderson. "Tom Stacy: A top anti-wind activist got paid by a fossil fuel funded group."

³² Barnett, Kyle. "Contentious debate unfolds in Knox County over Open Road Renewables' solar project plans." *Mount Vernon News*, December 4, 2023. <https://mountvernonnews.com/stories/652775625-contentious-debate-unfolds-in-knox-county-over-open-road-renewables-solar-project-plans>.

³³ Kowalski. "Anonymously funded group stokes local opposition to Ohio solar project."

³⁴ "New research yields insights into attitudes and perceptions of large-scale solar project neighbors." *Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory*, April 16, 2024.

<https://emp.lbl.gov/news/new-research-yields-insights-attitudes-and-perceptions-large-scale-solar-project>.

³⁵ Meyer, Theodor. "New nonprofit will fight Green New Deal, promote natural gas." *Politico*, September 30, 2019.

<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/politico-influence/2019/09/30/new-nonprofit-will-fight-green-new-deal-promote-natural-gas-764862>.

NIMBY activists have also retreated from formal alliances with SPN think tanks like the Caesar Rodney Institute (CRI) when the funding those groups have received from the fossil fuel industry creates controversy. For instance, a Nantucket-based group recently [publicly disassociated](#) itself from the CRI-backed anti-offshore American Coalition for Ocean Protection after [research](#) and [reporting](#) followed the money trail from CRI and ACOP back to the fossil fuel industry.³⁶

³⁶ Oliver, Vallorie, letter to the editor. "ACK for Whales Responds." *The Providence Independent*, February 29, 2024. <https://provincetownindependent.org/opinion/2024/02/28/letters-february-28-2024/>; Walsh, Alistair. "US: Anti-renewable groups target whale deaths." *Deutsche Welle*, March 6, 2023. <https://www.dw.com/en/us-anti-renewable-groups-use-whale-deaths-to-block-offshore-wind/a-64870256>; Slevin, Isaac, William Kattrup and Timmons Roberts. "Against the Wind: A Map of the Anti-Offshore Wind Network in the Eastern United States." *The Climate and Development Lab*, 2023. <https://www.climatedevlab.brown.edu/post/against-the-wind-a-map-of-the-anti-offshore-wind-network-in-the-eastern-united-states>.

A Who's Who of Renewable Energy Opponents

Fossil Fuel Industry Funders:

Alliance Resource Partners:

Alliance Resource Partners is an Oklahoma-based coal, oil, and gas company that's been [helmed by its CEO and President Joseph Craft](#) since 1999.³⁷

EPI found annual tax reports that show Craft's [foundation contributed](#) \$750,000 from 2020 to 2022 to the [Texas Public Policy Foundation](#), a major political opponent of wind and solar power nationally.³⁸ Craft [spoke](#) at TPPF's Victory Summit in 2022.³⁹

"... I'm sure that we had a little wind earlier tonight and that's why the lights were flickering," Craft said during the event.

He also said that some solar farms weren't being built because they couldn't get enough land.

The Joseph W. Craft III Foundation contributed a total of \$550,000 in 2019 and 2020 to the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), where senior fellow Benjamin Zycher [churned out articles](#) attacking renewables and climate science.⁴⁰ AEI currently [lists](#) Craft and his spouse, Ambassador Kelly Craft, as members of its National Council.⁴¹

"The council, composed of business and civic leaders from across the country, acts as a sounding board for AEI's leadership on programmatic developments and new initiatives," AEI said in its [2020 annual report](#), which also listed the Crafts as members of the National Council.⁴²

"These leaders serve as ambassadors for the Institute, helping us extend the reach of our work to new groups of investors and leaders."

³⁷ "About Us." *Alliance Resource Partners*. <https://www.arlp.com/about-us/>

³⁸ "Form 990 Return of Private Foundation." *Joseph W. Craft III Foundation*, forms covering fiscal years 2020-2022. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/731514539>

³⁹ Texas Public Policy Foundation. "Joe Craft - I Miss Leadership That Values Energy Security, Don't You?" *YouTube*, October 7, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYq0EYMTyXo>.

⁴⁰ Wallison, Peter J., and Benjamin Zycher. "What We Really Know About Climate Change." *American Enterprise Institute*, September 20, 2021. <https://www.aei.org/articles/what-we-really-know-about-climate-change/>; Zycher, Benjamin. "The Trouble with 'renewable' Energy." *American Enterprise Institute*, October 10, 2019. <https://www.aei.org/articles/the-trouble-with-renewable-energy/>.

⁴¹ "National Council." *American Enterprise Institute*. <https://www.aei.org/about/national-council/>.

⁴² "2020 Annual Report." *American Enterprise Institute*. <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2020-Annual-Report-LR-Final.pdf?x91208>.

Craft's foundation also contributed \$900,000 to [Government Accountability & Oversight](#), a group led by climate-denying attorney Chris Horner, from 2020-2022.⁴³

In 2019, Alliance Resource Partners publicly [opposed an Indiana solar farm](#) proposed by Vectren Energy.⁴⁴

American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers

The American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers (AFPM) is a trade association that represents companies from throughout the oil supply chain. Its [board](#) includes representatives from oil and gas companies like Cheniere Energy, Chevron, Citgo, Energy Transfer, ExxonMobil, Flint Hill Resources (a subsidiary of Koch Industries), Marathon Petroleum, and Valero.⁴⁵

AFPM has [contributed](#) hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to the American Energy Alliance (the advocacy arm of the [Institute for Energy Research](#)) in recent years, as well as smaller amounts to other anti-renewables groups like the [Caesar Rodney Institute](#), Competitive Enterprise Institute, and the [Heartland Institute](#).⁴⁶

AFPM has also [sponsored State Policy Network annual meetings](#), including one where the finalists for a "Best Issue Campaign" award included the Caesar Rodney Institute's anti-offshore wind campaign.⁴⁷ John Eick, AFPM's Manager of State and Local Outreach, attended and spoke on a panel attacking clean energy and climate policies at SPN's 2019 annual meeting.

BP, Shell, and Total [quit AFPM](#) a few years ago after their memberships were called out in corporate climate accountability research by [organizations like the Union of Concerned Scientists](#).⁴⁸

Ariel Corporation

Ariel Corporation manufactures compressors utilized globally by the methane gas industry. It's a privately owned company that's been led for three generations by the family of founder James P. Buchwald. Daughter Karen Buchwald Wright and her husband Tom Rastin represent the second generation of the family to lead Ariel Corp. Buchwald Wright retired as CEO in 2021, and is [now](#)

⁴³ "Government Accountability and Oversight (GAO)." *DeSmog*.

<https://www.desmog.com/government-accountability-and-oversight/>.

⁴⁴ Matyi, Bob. "Alliance Argues against Vectren's Proposed Solar Project in Indiana." *S&P Global*. January 2, 2019.

<https://www.spglobal.com/commodityinsights/en/market-insights/latest-news/electric-power/010219-alliance-argues-against-st-vectrens-proposed-solar-project-in-indiana>.

⁴⁵ "Board of Directors." *American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers*.

https://www2.afpm.org/forms/committee/CommitteeFormPublic/view?id=FBF00000030&_gl=1*5p97m0*_ga*MTQzMjk0Mz11MS4xNzEwMTY0NDM4*_ga_9LMQT72TBP*MTcxMDE3NzY0OS4yLjEuMTcxMDE3NzY3NC4zNS4wLjA.

⁴⁶ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax." *American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers*, forms covering fiscal years 2012-2022. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/530115970>

⁴⁷ "State Policy Network: Political attacks on wind and solar power." *Energy and Policy Institute*.

⁴⁸ Bousoo, Ron. "France's Total quits top U.S. oil lobby in climate split." *Reuters*, January 15, 2021.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN29K23I/>; Pinko, Nicole. "ExxonMobil Versus Chevron: Fight for Second-to-Last Place Among Fossil Fuel Companies Has Begun." *Union of Concerned Scientists*, March 19, 2021.

<https://blog.ucsusa.org/nicole-pinko/exxonmobil-versus-chevron-fight-for-second-to-last-place/>.

[chairman of the company](#).⁴⁹ Her son Alex Wright took over as CEO. Rastin was the company's executive vice president before he retired.

Rastin and Buchwald Wright continue to helm the [Ariel Foundation](#) that's funded by contributions from Ariel Corporation.⁵⁰ While the Ariel Foundation generally makes publicly reported charitable contributions to local organizations in the Mount Vernon area, Rastin and Buchwald Wright's influence spending has taken the form of harder-to-trace contributions that occur outside the foundation's reporting.

Research by EPI revealed Buchwald Wright and Rastin as key backers of the [The Empowerment Alliance](#) (TEA), a 501(c)(4) dark money group that promotes gas as green energy and frequently attacks wind and solar power.⁵¹ TEA is [currently campaigning against solar farms](#) in Ohio.⁵² TEA's Ohio director Mitch Given described the campaign as "fighting the nonsense of turning corn fields into solar fields" in [a presentation](#) to a meeting of the Business First Caucus that includes members of the Ohio House and Senate.⁵³

An anti-solar LLC called [Knox Smart Development](#) formed in 2023 to fight the Frasier Solar project near Ariel Corp.'s hometown of Mount Vernon.⁵⁴ The "[OUR MISSION](#)" section of Knox Smart Development's website initially included a link to "Empower America" that landed on an [anti-renewables page on TEA's website](#).⁵⁵ The website also [featured](#) a report opposing Frasier Solar that had the file name "TEA_US_NoSolar.pdf."⁵⁶

Rastin later filed [public comments](#) opposing the Frasier Solar project with the Ohio Power Siting Board and attached a copy of Knox Smart Development's motion to intervene in the case, but made no mention of his affiliations with TEA or his career with Ariel Corp.⁵⁷

In January of 2024, Rastin [contributed \\$10,000 to support the Citizens for Local Choice ballot initiative](#) aimed at repealing Michigan's new law streamlining siting for renewable energy

⁴⁹ "Karen Buchwald Wright Awarded 2024 Oilfield Patriot Award." *Ariel Corporation*, March 21, 2024. <https://www.arielcorp.com/company/newsroom/karen-patriot-award.html>.

⁵⁰ "Form 990 PF Return of Private Foundation." Ariel Foundation, form covering fiscal year 2022. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/270226408>

⁵¹ "The Empowerment Alliance." *Energy and Policy Institute*. <https://energyandpolicy.org/the-empowerment-alliance/>.

⁵² Kowalski. "Anonymously funded group stokes local opposition to Ohio solar project."

⁵³ Given, Mitch. "Unleashing Natural Gas." *The Empowerment Alliance*.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24225107-ohio-senate-open-records-law-request-response-with-the-empowerment-alliance-emails-bios-and-presentation-december-2023#document/p19>.

⁵⁴ Kowalski. "Anonymously funded group stokes local opposition to Ohio solar project."

⁵⁵ "Links." *Knox Smart Development*, 2023.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20231111003107/https://knoxsmartdevelopment.com/links>; "Guide to understanding the impact of wind, solar energy projects." *The Empowerment Alliance*, 2023.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20231115150047/https://empoweringamerica.org/questions-for-renewables/#>.

⁵⁶ "Reports." *Knox Smart Development*, 2023.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20231111003111/https://knoxsmartdevelopment.com/reports>

⁵⁷ Rastin, Tom. "Public Comment of Tom Rastin electronically filed by Docketing Staff." *Public Utilities Commission of Ohio*, December 13, 2023. Filed in Docket 23-0796-EL-BGN.

<https://dis.puc.state.oh.us/DocumentRecord.aspx?DocID=21abbd6-04ab-4781-bc6e-3de5c870d984>

projects.⁵⁸ Longtime anti-renewables activist and Michigander [Kevon Martis](#) is the public face of that initiative. Martis was [one of two presenters](#) at a February 2024 anti-solar town hall meeting hosted by Knox Smart Development.⁵⁹

Rastin [contributed \\$2,000](#) in February 2024 to [anti-renewables](#) Ohio House candidate Scott Pullins, an attorney who is [representing convicted former Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder](#) in several campaign finance complaints.⁶⁰ Pullins [lost by a significant margin](#) in his GOP primary.⁶¹ Pullins previously ran Third Rail Politics, a site that was [secretly funded by Householder's political operation](#).⁶²

The Karen Buchwald Wright Trust [contributed \\$250,000 to Householder's 501\(c\)\(4\) group Generation Now](#) in 2017, when Buchwald Wright was still CEO of Ariel Corp.⁶³ Generation Now later pleaded guilty in a racketeering case that detailed how the group was used to conceal \$60 million in bribes paid by FirstEnergy to influence Householder. The scheme resulted in enactment of [Ohio's House Bill 6](#), which delivered lucrative ratepayer bailouts to FirstEnergy and other utilities and also rolled back Ohio's renewable energy and energy efficiency standards.⁶⁴

Buchwald Wright served on the State Policy Network's board from 2017 to 2020. The Energy and Policy Institute obtained a [copy of SPN's draft Form 990 for 2019](#) that included an unredacted Schedule B, which listed a \$700,00 contribution from "Karen Wright Household" located at Ariel Corp.'s address.⁶⁵ An [earlier list of SPN's donors from 2010](#) made public by Nick Surgey of Documented included a \$100,000 contribution from Wright.⁶⁶

⁵⁸ Allnutt, Brian. "Hiding donors: Attorney says Michigan anti-renewable ballot effort may have broken campaign finance law." *Planet Detroit*, March 28, 2024. <https://planetdetroit.org/2024/03/donations-from-dark-money-nonprofit-michigan-farm-bureau-raise-concern-in-michigans-solar-siting-ballot-campaign/>.

⁵⁹ Anderson. "Blocking renewable energy is a top state legislative priority for network of pro-fossil fuels think tanks."

⁶⁰ "Contribution results" for Scott Pullins for Ohio. *Ohio Secretary of State*.

[https://www6.ohiosos.gov/ords/f?p=CFDISCLOSURE:45:16885537203249::NO::P45_ENTITY_ID:9759](https://www6.ohiosos.gov/ords/f?p=CFDISCLOSURE:45:16885537203249::NO::P45_ENTITY_ID:9759;); "Who is on the Ballot? Candidates for the March 19, 2024, Ohio Primaries." *Kenyon College*.

<https://www.kenyon.edu/campus-life/civic-engagement/voter-information/who-is-on-the-ballot/>; Zuckerman, Jake. "Larry Householder is in prison. His campaign is still paying legal bills." *Cleveland.com*, January 31, 2024.

<https://www.cleveland.com/open/2024/01/larry-householder-is-in-prison-his-campaign-is-still-paying-legal-bills.html>.

⁶¹ "2024 OH Republican Primary Results - State House District 98." *Columbus Dispatch*, March 19, 2024.

<https://www.dispatch.com/elections/results/2024-03-19/race/36320>.

⁶² Balmert, Jessie, and Laura Bischoff. "Householder, Borges trial resumes with FBI agent's testimony." *The Columbus Dispatch*, January 31, 2023.

<https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/politics/2023/01/31/householder-borges-trial-resumes-with-fbi-agents-testimony/69854001007/>.

⁶³ Anderson, Dave. "Bank records reveal secret payments to Larry Householder's dark money group." *Energy and Policy Institute*, March 29, 2023. <https://energyandpolicy.org/larry-householder-dark-money/>.

⁶⁴ Johnson, Nathanael. "How a \$60 million bribery scandal helped Ohio pass the 'worst energy policy in the country.'" *Grist*, January 26, 2022.

<https://grist.org/politics/how-a-60-million-bribery-scandal-helped-ohio-pass-the-worst-energy-policy-in-the-country/>.

⁶⁵ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax." *State Policy Network*, form covering fiscal year 2019. <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24484881-state-policy-network-irs-form-990-for-2019-with-donors-listed>.

⁶⁶ "Form 199 Cash Contributions of \$500 or more." *State Policy Network*, 2010.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6029556-SPN-2010-Donors>.

Buchwald Wright has also [served on the board of directors](#) of American Petroleum Institute.⁶⁷ [Online bios](#) indicate that she has contributed money to the American Enterprise Institute, Competitive Enterprise Institute, Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, Heritage Foundation, and Institute for Energy Research, a veritable who's who of groups involved in fossil fuel industry disinformation campaigns against climate science and cleantech.⁶⁸

The Daily Beast also recently [reported](#) that Ariel Corp. paid \$135,000 to the Daily Caller News Foundation in 2021, based on another unredacted Form 990 that listed Tucker Carlson as the foundation's chairman.⁶⁹ The Daily Caller has [reported](#) on The Empowerment Alliance's campaigns to promote gas.⁷⁰

Wright and Rastin did not respond to an email from EPI requesting comment on their funding of TEA, SPN, and Generation Now. The email also asked the couple if they believe gas production and pipelines also should not be located on farmland, given TEA's opposition to solar projects located in agricultural areas.

Desert Royalty Company

Desert Royalty Company is a Texas-based oil and gas investment company.

CEO Kyle Stallings is [currently listed](#) as a chairman of the [Texas Public Policy Foundation's](#) board of directors.⁷¹

"Oil is ubiquitous," Stallings [said](#) at a 2020 meeting of the Society of Independent Professional Earth Scientists, where he attacked wind and solar power.⁷²

Senior advisor Buddy Glieb is the [founder of TLOW](#), or Texas Landowners Opposing Wind, a group [opposing](#) wind and solar farms in Brown and Coleman counties.⁷³

⁶⁷ Morrison, Richard. "The Role of the Business Leader in Public Affairs and Philanthropy." *Competitive Enterprise Institute*, May 2020.

https://cei.org/sites/default/files/The_Role_of_the_Business_Leader_in_Public_Affairs_and_Philanthropy.pdf.

⁶⁸ "Karen Buchwald Wright." *Miami University Foundation*.

<https://www.givetomiamioh.org/s/916/22/landing-int.aspx?pgid=6796&gid=1>; "2021 Ideas Summit Speakers." *National Review Institute*,

2021. <https://web.archive.org/web/20210622171836/https://nriinstitute.org/events-1/nri-summit/2021-2/2021-ideas-summit-speakers/>.

⁶⁹ Sollenberger, Roger. "Donors to Tucker Carlson's Daily Caller News Foundation Revealed." *The Daily Beast*, updated December 20, 2022. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/donors-to-tucker-carlsons-daily-caller-news-foundation-revealed>.

⁷⁰ White, Chris. "EXCLUSIVE: Sen. Cruz Among 141 Political Leaders Pledging To Keep US A Dominant Natural Gas Producer." *Daily Caller*, July 2, 2020. <https://dailycaller.com/2020/07/02/ted-cruz-energy-dominant-natural-gas/>.

⁷¹ "Board of Directors." *Texas Public Policy Foundation*. <https://www.texaspolicy.com/about/board/>.

⁷² "Speaker calls for leveling the field between oil, renewables." *San Antonio Express News*, October 24, 2020.

<https://www.expressnews.com/business/oil/article/Speaker-calls-for-leveling-the-field-between-oil-15670646.php>.

⁷³ Fairley, Juliette. "Landowner organizes group to oppose windfarms in Brown, Coleman counties." *Petroplex News*, August 12, 2020.

<https://petroplexnews.com/stories/545717571-landowner-organizes-group-to-oppose-windfarms-in-brown-coleman-counties>; "TLOW.org." *TLOW*, 2018. <https://www.tlow.org/>.

DonorsTrust

DonorsTrust is known as the dark money ATM of the right. Research by Greenpeace [documented](#) how climate denial groups, many of which also engage in attacks on renewables, saw an influx of funding from DonorsTrust and the affiliated Donors Capital Fund as publicly disclosed direct contributions from ExxonMobil and Koch foundations to those groups declined in the late 2000s and early 2010s.⁷⁴

[DonorsTrust](#) and [Donors Capital Fund received](#) millions of dollars from Koch nonprofits like The Knowledge and Progress Fund during the 2000s and 2010s.⁷⁵ Ultra Petroleum listed DonorsTrust as a creditor during its bankruptcy in 2016, but it's not clear from court records how much money the petroleum company contributed to DonorsTrust.⁷⁶

DonorsTrust remains a key source of funding for climate denial groups that are increasingly focused on fighting wind and solar farms, according to the [latest analysis](#) by the Center for Media & Democracy.⁷⁷ In recent years, DonorsTrust has [brought in money](#) from other dark money portals that don't disclose their donors, such as State Solutions Inc. (a 501(c)(4) affiliate of the Republican Governors Association), the Donald Trump-aligned America First Works, and conservative political operative Leonard Leo's 85 Fund.⁷⁸

ExxonMobil

Publicly, ExxonMobil has promoted its [procurement of wind](#) and [solar power](#) to help power its operations in states like Texas and New Mexico, as well as [its production of lubricants](#) used in wind turbines.⁷⁹

In 2020, ExxonMobil quietly joined other members of the Texas Industrial Energy Consumers (TIEC), including Kinder Morgan and Occidental, in [opposing](#) American Electric Power's plan to

⁷⁴ "Donors Trust: The shadow operation that has laundered \$146 million in climate-denial funding." *Greenpeace*, 2013. <https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/DonorsTrust.pdf>.

⁷⁵ "Donors Trust." *DeSmog*. <https://www.desmog.com/who-donors-trust/>; "Donors Capital Fund." *DeSmog*. <https://www.desmog.com/donors-capital-fund/>.

⁷⁶ "Creditor Matrix." *Ultra Petroleum*, April 30, 2016. Filed in case 16-32202 before the U.S. Bankruptcy Court Southern District of Texas Houston District. <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24793022-ultra-petroleum-2016-creditor-matrix#document/p53>

⁷⁷ Armiak, David. "DonorsTrust Funneled \$134 Million to Right-Wing Groups in 2022." *Exposed by CMD*, November 17, 2023. <https://www.exposedbycmd.org/2023/11/17/donorstrust-funneled-134-million-to-right-wing-groups-in-2022/>.

⁷⁸ "State Policy Network: Political attacks on wind and solar power." *Energy and Policy Institute*. <https://energyandpolicy.org/state-policy-network-attacks-renewable-energy/>

⁷⁹ "Emission-reduction plans and progress." *ExxonMobil*, January 8, 2024.

<https://corporate.exxonmobil.com/sustainability-and-reports/advancing-climate-solutions/emission-reduction-plans-and-progress>; Martin, Chris, and Kevin Crowley. "Exxon Will Use Wind, Solar to Produce Crude Oil in Texas." *Bloomberg*, November 28, 2018.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-11-28/oil-giant-exxon-turns-to-wind-solar-for-home-state-operations>; "Shaping the Future of Wind Energy." *ExxonMobil*, January 11, 2023.

<https://corporate.exxonmobil.com/who-we-are/technology-and-collaborations/wind-energy-institute-canada-lubricants>.

provide 300 megawatts of new wind energy from the North Central Wind Energy project to customers in Texas.⁸⁰

ExxonMobil pledged to stop funding climate denial groups in 2008, though its funding of some groups involved in attacks on renewable energy continued in more recent years. For example, ExxonMobil continued to fund the [Manhattan Institute](#) until [as recently as 2019](#), and [paid \\$150,000](#) to the American Enterprise Institute in 2022.⁸¹

FirstEnergy

In 2013, FirstEnergy Solutions (FES) played a major role in killing the Turning Point Solar project through its opposition to American Electric Power's proposal to purchase power from the project, which was poised to become Ohio's largest solar farm. FES was [joined in that opposition by influential attorney and lobbyist Samuel Randazzo](#), who represented the Industrial Energy Users-Ohio in the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio case that decided Turning Point's fate.⁸²

Years later, a federal criminal investigation revealed that [FirstEnergy secretly paid more than \\$22 million to Randazzo's personal consulting firms](#) between 2010 and 2019, a total capped off by a \$4.3 million payment made shortly before Randazzo's appointment as chairman of PUCO and the Ohio Power Siting Board in early 2019.⁸³

Randazzo [died by suicide](#) while under indictment on state and federal charges before a full picture of everything FirstEnergy paid him to do emerged in ongoing criminal and civil cases, but at least one of those cases may proceed with Randazzo's consulting firms as the defendants.⁸⁴ Additional details continue to emerge in internal company records made public through related regulatory cases, civil litigation, and public records requests.

The record is clear that between 2010 and 2020, Randazzo was a [vocal opponent of wind power projects in Ohio](#). He spoke at meetings convened by local anti-wind power groups like the Seneca Anti-Wind Union and publicly represented the anti-wind group Greenwich Neighbors United as a lawyer and lobbyist.

⁸⁰ Anderson. "ExxonMobil attacks wind power, carbon tax in Texas."

⁸¹ Anderson, Dave. "Who's behind Trump's claim the Green New Deal will cost \$100 trillion?" *Energy and Policy Institute*, March 14, 2019. <https://energyandpolicy.org/green-new-deal-cost/>; "2019 ExxonMobil Worldwide Giving Report." *ExxonMobil*. <https://corporate.exxonmobil.com/-/media/Global/Files/worldwide-giving/2019-Worldwide-Giving-Report.pdf>; "Worldwide Giving Report 2022." *ExxonMobil*. <https://corporate.exxonmobil.com/-/media/global/files/worldwide-giving/2022-worldwide-giving-report.pdf>.

⁸² Anderson. "Samuel Randazzo: PUCO candidate is an opponent of renewable energy."

⁸³ Zuckerman, Jake. "FirstEnergy said it bribed a regulator for \$4.3 million. Here's how it worked." *Ohio Capital Journal*, July 29, 2021.

<https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2021/07/29/firstenergy-said-it-bribed-a-regulator-for-4-3-million-heres-how-it-worked/>.

⁸⁴ Zuckerman, Jake. "Randazzo's death clouds path forward on criminal, civil FirstEnergy bribery cases." *Cleveland.com*, April 11, 2024. <https://www.cleveland.com/open/2024/04/randazzos-death-clouds-path-forward-on-criminal-civil-firstenergy-bribery-cases.html>.

“Nice - and good for you, Sam. Love it,” FirstEnergy’s Senior Vice President of External Affairs Michael Dowling [wrote in response to one 2016 email from Randazzo](#), in which Randazzo commented on his anti-wind efforts.⁸⁵

“As often as I can, I take on work for people who have been or are about to be run over by things like wind farm developers,” Randazzo said in the email. “I don’t do it for the money because if I did I would not do it all.”

One [five-year consulting agreement](#) from 2013 that was made public by the PUCO after Randazzo resigned shows his consulting firm would be paid \$300,000-\$500,000 per year by FES for up to 80 hours a month of “Work” to be “Defined from time to time” by FES executives.⁸⁶ The consulting agreement listed \$500,000 as the amount to be paid in 2016 through monthly payments of \$41,666.

Dennis Schreiner, another anti-wind activist in Ohio, used to [work at the Davis-Besse nuclear plants](#) owned by FES (now Energy Harbor, which was recently acquired by Vistra Energy).⁸⁷ When it declared bankruptcy in 2018, FES attributed losses incurred by its coal-fired power plants to competition from cheaper and cleaner sources of electricity.

International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825

International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 825 is a union located in New Jersey that’s been contracted to work on methane gas pipelines. The union and its affiliates have [contributed money to multiple entities](#) that targeted offshore wind power with misleading ads about dead whales in 2023, an election year in New Jersey.⁸⁸

Engineers Labor Employer Cooperative 825, or ELEC 825, paid \$100,000 to the [Republican State Leadership Committee](#) in 2023.

The union’s PAC contributed \$25,000 to Fixing New Jersey, which stated in its [incorporation papers](#) that it would work to improve voter participation during off-year elections by working to “educate, motivate and mobilize New Jersey residents on relevant ‘kitchen table’ issues.”⁸⁹

Fixing New Jersey’s paperwork said it would operate like a 501(c)(4), but it does not appear to be registered as a nonprofit with the IRS. The contribution from IUOE Local 825 is one of the few publicly reported contributions to Fixing New Jersey, the others being from Commerce NJ and

⁸⁵ Michael Dowling email to Samuel Randazzo, November 17, 2016.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24793669-fe-doc-prod-038769-samuel-randazzo-and-firstenergy-lobbyist-michael-dowling-emails-re-anti-wind-efforts-2016>

⁸⁶ “Consulting Services Agreement Term Sheet.” *FirstEnergy*, January 8 2013.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24519035-20130108-sustainability-fund-confidential>.

⁸⁷ Anderson, Dave. “Anti-wind activist who backed nuclear bailout bill tied to FirstEnergy.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, May 28, 2019. <https://energyandpolicy.org/anti-wind-firstenergy/>.

⁸⁸ Anderson, Dave. 2023. “Fossil fuel money behind anti-offshore wind ads in New Jersey.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, October 23, 2023. <https://energyandpolicy.org/fossil-fuel-funding-anti-offshore-wind-ads/>.

⁸⁹ Fixing New Jersey. “Certificate of Incorporation of Fixing New Jersey.” *State of New Jersey Department of the Treasury, Division of Revenue & Enterprise Services*, January 22, 2022.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24037895-fixing-new-jersey-certificate-of-incorporation-2022>.

[Constructors for Good Government](#), the PAC for the [pro-gas](#) Utility and Transportation Contractors Association.⁹⁰

The Local 825 Management Fund also pumped \$55,000 into [Affordable Energy for New Jersey](#), another 501(c)(4) that's spent over \$250,000 on [Facebook ads](#) that frequently support gas and attack offshore wind and other cleantech, according to the latest data from Facebook's ad library.⁹¹

Koch Industries

Charles Koch, the billionaire CEO and Chairman of Koch Industries, sits atop a private corporate empire that operates in multiple sectors of the fossil fuel industry and controls a powerful political network of nonprofits and donors. Organizations backed by the Koch network have [closely coordinated](#) with anti-renewables activists.⁹²

The Energy and Policy Institute documented the role that Koch network money and organizations played in campaigns against state renewable energy standards and net metering programs in detailed [reports focused on 2013-2014](#) and [2015](#), and more recently in numerous [blog posts](#).⁹³

The latest annual tax reports filed by the network of nonprofits controlled by Charles Koch [continue to show millions of dollars](#) going to State Policy Network groups and other organizations involved in anti-renewable energy campaigns.⁹⁴ The Koch network has contributed heavily to donor-advised funds like [DonorsTrust](#) and the [National Philanthropic Trust](#) that have helped to shield the source of millions of dollars in contributions to nonprofits.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ ELEC Reports and Data Search System search result for "Expense by Receiver" for Fixing NJ. *New Jersey Election Enforcement Commission*.
<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24794163-fixing-nj-inc-contribution-from-constructors-for-good-government-pac>

⁹¹ Meta. "Affordable Energy for New Jersey." *Facebook Ad Library*, July 22, 2024.

http://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?active_status=all&ad_type=all&country=US&view_all_page_id=102281724942742

⁹² Anderson, Dave. "George David Banks: Trump's climate advisor worked with anti-wind and climate skeptic groups." *Energy and Policy Institute*, September 28, 2017. <https://energyandpolicy.org/george-david-banks-trump-wind-power/>; Anderson, Dave. "Trump's false claim about windmills, noise and cancer defended by Koch-backed blog." *Energy and Policy Institute*, April 17, 2019. <https://energyandpolicy.org/trump-anti-wind-koch/>

⁹³ "Attacks on Renewable Energy Policies." *Energy and Policy Institute*, editions covering 2013-2014 and 2015; Anderson, Dave. "Utilities, Koch groups back Sununu's veto of net metering bill in New Hampshire." *Energy and Policy Institute*, September 5, 2018. <https://energyandpolicy.org/netmeteringveto/h/>; Anderson, Dave. "Harry Brown: North Carolina's anti-wind lawmaker is backed by Koch money." *Energy and Policy Institute*, May 8, 2019. <https://energyandpolicy.org/harry-brown-north-carolinas-anti-wind-lawmaker-is-backed-by-koch-money/>.

⁹⁴ Armiak. "Charles Koch's 'Stand Together' Donor Conduits Move \$176 Million into his Network, Higher Education, and Right-Wing Policy, Advocacy, Litigation, and Media Groups in 2022."

⁹⁵ Gibson, Connor. "Koch Network Uses National Philanthropic Trust to Conceal Transactions." *Exposed by CMD*, August 11, 2022.

<https://www.exposedbycmd.org/2022/08/11/koch-network-uses-national-philanthropic-trust-to-conceal-transactions/>

Murray Energy

Murray Energy had to publicly disclose during its bankruptcy that it [paid over \\$1 million to the law firm](#) Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff LLP, which [represented opponents](#) of multiple wind and solar projects and proposals in Ohio.⁹⁶

Prior to Murray Energy's bankruptcy, Cleveland.com [reported](#) that the coal producer had secretly paid for legal fees and expert witnesses for anti-wind activists who opposed the Icebreaker anti-wind power project on Lake Erie before the Ohio Power Siting Board.⁹⁷ Murray Energy's role was only revealed because of questions raised by attorneys for environmental groups like the Ohio Environmental Council in data requests and depositions. CEO Robert Murray joined the attack publicly with a [letter to Cleveland.com](#) after the company's role in funding the opposition was exposed.⁹⁸

Benesch attorney John Stock, who was paid by Murray Energy to represent the anti-wind activists in the case, had previously sought to [intervene in multiple wind power siting cases in Ohio](#) on behalf of a murky group called Campaign for American Affordable and Reliable Energy that admitted it represented coal interests but did not disclose which coal companies it represented.⁹⁹ Stock also represented Murray Energy in opposing Dayton Power & Light's closure of a coal plant before the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio.

Murray Energy's support for groups involved in anti-wind and -solar efforts extended beyond Ohio. [Bankruptcy case filings](#) revealed Murray's [funding of multiple national climate denial groups](#) that spread disinformation about renewables, including the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, Competitive Enterprise Institute, and Heartland Institute.¹⁰⁰

National Philanthropic Trust

The National Philanthropic Trust (NPT) is a [self-described](#) "leader in donor-advised funds (DAFs) and one of the largest grantmaking institutions in the United States."¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Anderson. "Murray Energy paid over \$1 million to law firm that's fought renewable energy.;" Anderson, Dave. "Seneca Anti-Wind Union has ties to a lawyer for Big Coal." *Energy and Policy Institute*, December 12, 2018.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/seneca-anti-wind-union/>; Anderson. "Anti-wind activist who backed nuclear bailout bill tied to FirstEnergy."

⁹⁷ McCarty, James F. "Big Coal joins fight against Lake Erie green energy wind turbines." *Cleveland.com*, August 5, 2018. https://www.cleveland.com/metro/2018/08/big_coal_joins_fight_against_l.html.

⁹⁸ Murray, Robert. "Murray Energy Corp. is just trying to get the facts out about wind-power costs: Letter to the Editor." *Cleveland.com*, August 7, 2018. https://www.cleveland.com/letters/2018/08/wind_power_is_intermittent_and.html.

⁹⁹ Kowalski, Kathiann M. "Secrecy surrounds pro-coal group eyeing Ohio wind cases." *Energy News Network*, December 4, 2017. <https://energynews.us/2017/12/04/secrecy-surrounds-pro-coal-group-eyeing-ohio-wind-cases/>.

¹⁰⁰ "Global Notes, Methodology, and Specific Disclosures Regarding the Debtors Schedules Assets and Liabilities and Statements of Financial Affairs." *Murray Energy Holdings Co.*, December 14, 2019. Filed in Case 19-56885 before the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Ohio.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6582043-142050311162-Rep-1412102639-1>; Friedman. "A Coal Baron Funded Climate Denial as His Company Spiraled Into Bankruptcy."

¹⁰¹ "A Leader in Donor-Advised Fund." *National Philanthropic Trust*.

<https://www.nptrust.org/#:~:text=NPT%20is%20a%20leader%20in,institutions%20in%20the%20United%20States.>

While many of the grants made by the National Philanthropic Trust each year go to credible charitable organizations, donor-advised funds controlled by the NPT also helped to shield the sources of contributions to groups like the Competitive Enterprise Institute, Heartland Institute, and State Policy Network in 2021 and 2022, according to a [tax report](#) reviewed by EPI.¹⁰²

NPT is part of a complex network of nonprofits that serve as multi-way pass-throughs that help to obscure the passage of money from major donors like [Charles Koch's Stand Together network](#) to the intended end point recipients.¹⁰³ In 2022, NPT received millions of dollars from Charles Koch nonprofits, including [\\$23.5 million from the Knowledge and Progress Fund](#), \$6.5 million from the [Charles Koch Charitable Fund](#), and approximately \$1.7 million from Stand Together Trust.¹⁰⁴ NPT also paid out over \$25 million to Koch's Stand Together Foundation in 2022.¹⁰⁵

Paul Singer

Paul Singer is the billionaire founder of Elliott Management, a hedge fund that's [a top institutional shareholder in coal producer Peabody Energy](#) and that is also [currently invested](#) in oil and gas companies like Marathon Petroleum and Phillips 66.¹⁰⁶

He's also the chairman of the [Manhattan Institute](#), a think tank based in New York that's frequently attacked climate science and renewable energy projects.¹⁰⁷ Singer's foundation reports making annual contributions to the Manhattan Institute, [most recently \\$1.6 million paid](#) during a fiscal year that covered most of 2022.¹⁰⁸

The Paul E. Singer Foundation [paid \\$300,000 to longtime GOP operative Susan Ralston's consulting firm](#) between 2018 and 2020, as NPR and Floodlight first reported.¹⁰⁹ Ralston heads up Citizens for Responsible Solar, which has coordinated with anti-solar groups in multiple states.

¹⁰² "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax." *National Philanthropic Trust*, 2021.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/237825575/202311359349313966/full>

¹⁰³ Gibson. "Koch Network Uses National Philanthropic Trust to Conceal Transactions."

¹⁰⁴ "Form 990-PF Return of Private Foundation." *Knowledge and Progress Fund Inc.* 2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/541899251/202303199349101965/full>; "Form 990-PF Return of Private Foundation." *Charles Koch Charitable Fund*, 2022.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24237428-2022-charles-koch-charitable-fund-990#document/p25>; "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Taxes." *Stand Together Trust*, 2022.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24237441-2022-stand-together-trust-990#document/p50>.

¹⁰⁵ "Form 990 Return of Tax Exempt Organization." *Stand Together Foundation*, 2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/273197768/202333199349301538/full>.

¹⁰⁶ "Peabody Energy Corporation Common Stock (BTU) Institutional Holdings." *Nasdaq*, 2024.

https://www.nasdaq.com/market-activity/stocks/btu/institutional-holdings?page=1&rows_per_page=10; Elliott Investment Management. "Form 13F-HR - Quarterly report filed by institutional managers, Holdings." *Securities and Exchange Commission*, May 15, 2024.

<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1791786/000101359424000480/0001013594-24-000480-index.htm>

¹⁰⁷ Anderson. "Who's behind Trump's claim the Green New Deal will cost \$100 trillion?"

¹⁰⁸ "990-PF Return of Private Foundation." *Paul E. Singer Foundation*, 2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/272009342/202322839349101022/full>.

¹⁰⁹ Green, Miranda, Michael Copley and Ryan Kellman, and Green Miranda. "How misinformation about solar power hinders the fight against climate change." *NPR*. February 18, 2023.

<https://www.npr.org/2023/02/18/1154867064/solar-power-misinformation-activists-rural-america>.

Singer's foundation also contributed \$68 million in 2022 to the JP Morgan Charitable Giving Fund, a donor-advised fund managed by the [National Philanthropic Trust](#).

Strake Energy

George W. Strake, Jr., is the longtime president of the petroleum company Strake Energy. He's also president of the Strake Foundation.

The foundation contributed \$50,000 in 2022 to the [Texas Public Policy Foundation](#), where Strake is a director emeritus, [according to an annual tax report](#).¹¹⁰

The Strake Foundation also contributed smaller amounts of money that year to other key groups involved in disinformation campaigns against renewables, including the [American Legislative Exchange Council](#) and American Enterprise Institute.

¹¹⁰ "Form 990-PF Return of Private Foundation." *Strake Energy Foundation*, 2022.
<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/760041524/202323009349100617/full>

Front Groups

Americans for Affordable Energy

[Americans for Affordable Energy Inc.](#) (AAE) is a 501(c)(4) that formed in 2018.¹¹¹ Its stated mission is “advocating for policy solutions that lead to affordable and reliable energy for consumers and businesses.”

AAE [raised and spent nearly \\$500,000 in 2018](#), its only active year, when the group operated using names like Renewable Arkansas and Renewable Louisiana and pretended to be pro-solar, but solely focused on attacking the Wind Catcher project.¹¹²

The only officer listed on AAE’s incorporation papers and annual reports to the IRS is Andrew Portare, then the fiance of Frank Klepadlo, a director of research at the Hawthorn Group, a political consulting firm [known for getting caught up in multiple scandals while representing clients in the fossil fuel industry](#).¹¹³

American Legislative Exchange Council

In 2023, the corporate bill mill ALEC considered a new draft model bill, “Preserving The Environment, Open Spaces, Forests, Livability, and Wildlife Habitat Statute To Regulate Large Scale Solar Plants,” but did not adopt it as an official ALEC model policy. The [draft bill appeared on ALEC’s website](#) but has since been deleted.¹¹⁴

The draft model bill included a preamble that attacked solar as unreliable and pointed to changes in temperature near solar farms, while ignoring the many benefits of solar, including solar’s dramatically lower lifecycle emissions when compared to fossil fuels. Climate denial groups like the [Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow](#) (CFACT) that work closely with ALEC have tried to create a false equivalency between the relatively minor and localized temperature effects of solar farms and global climate change caused by emissions from burning fossil fuels.¹¹⁵ [Research](#) has shown that the temperature effects are largely limited to the area within a solar facility’s footprint and are either unmeasurable or minimal in adjacent areas.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Anderson, Dave. “Opponents of the Wind Catcher project have ties to fossil fuel interests, Hawthorn Group.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, May 14, 2018. <https://energyandpolicy.org/attacks-on-wind-catcher-fossil-fuel-interests/>.

¹¹² Anderson. “ExxonMobil attacks wind power, carbon tax in Texas.”

¹¹³ “Hawthorn Group.” *Energy and Policy Institute*. <https://energyandpolicy.org/hawthorn-group/>.

¹¹⁴ “Preserving The Environment, Open Spaces, Forests, Livability, and Wildlife Habitat.” *American Legislative Exchange Council*, July 28, 2023.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24795660-preserving-the-environment-open-spaces-forests-livability-and-wildlife-habitat-statute-to-regulate-large-scale-solar-plants-american-legislative-exchange-council-american-legislative-exchange-council>.

¹¹⁵ Flanakin, Duggan. “Solar panels generate mountains of waste — and heat the planet.” *Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow*, September 9, 2018.

<https://www.cfact.org/2020/09/18/solar-panels-generate-mountains-of-waste-and-heat-the-planet/>.

¹¹⁶ Cleveland, Tommy, and David Sarkisian. “Balancing Agricultural Productivity with Ground-Based Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Development.” *NC Clean Energy Technology Center*, May 2019.

The draft ALEC bill sought to impose restrictive siting limits on solar that included setbacks of at least 1,500 feet from residential lots, far beyond the [typical setbacks of 50-200 feet currently found in the U.S.](#)¹¹⁷

[Emails](#) obtained by EPI show ALEC shared copies of the draft bill with state legislators who are members of ALEC's Energy, Environment and Agriculture Task Force and [planned](#) to discuss the legislation at the group's annual meeting.¹¹⁸ The [task force meeting agenda](#) also featured a presentation on "An Energy Plan for Reliable, Affordable Electric Power" by David Stevenson of the [Caesar Rodney Institute](#).¹¹⁹ ALEC later [adopted](#) a similarly named model anti-renewable energy policy aimed at propping up coal plants, and [bills](#) based on that model have since popped up in a number of states.¹²⁰

A [list of task force meeting attendees](#) included lobbyists from Koch Industries, Alliance Resource Partners, the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers, and American Gas Association, as well as climate deniers like Steve Milloy of the [Energy and Environment Legal Institute](#) and Craig Rucker of CFACT.¹²¹

Advocating for model policies that obstruct utility-scale solar projects could further [divisions](#) between other longtime members of the ALEC task force from the utility industry, such as Arizona Public Service and the Edison Edison Electric Institute, and the fossil fuel industry.¹²²

Earlier ALEC's model bill attacked state clean energy policies like [renewable energy standards](#) and [net metering](#).¹²³ ALEC has received from fossil fuel industry sources like [AFPM](#), [Peabody Energy](#), and [Charles Koch's nonprofits](#).¹²⁴

ALEC also has a history of coordinating with anti-wind interests. In 2012, Todd Wynn, then ALEC's lead staffer on the EEA Task Force, was [listed as a participant](#) in [a D.C. coordinating](#)

<https://nccleantech.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Balancing-Agricultural-Productivity-with-Ground-Based-Solar-Photovoltaic-PV-Development-1.pdf>.

¹¹⁷ Mouw, Lindsay. "Nebraska Solar Siting Guide: A Roadmap for Counties." *Center For Rural Affairs*, June 2023.

<https://www.cfra.org/sites/default/files/publications/2nebraska-solar-siting-guide-a-roadmap-for-counties-web.pdf>.

¹¹⁸ Joe Trotter, director of ALEC's EEA Task Force, email sent to Arizona state senator Sine Kerr on July 18, 2023.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24363587-az-sens#document/p58>.

¹¹⁹ "Energy, Environment, and Agriculture Task Force Meeting Agenda." *American Legislative Exchange Council*, 2023.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24412267-co-sen-mark-baisley#document/p216>

¹²⁰ "The Electric Reliability Act - American Legislative Exchange Council." *American Legislative Exchange Council*, 2023.

<https://alec.org/model-policy/the-electric-reliability-act/>; Plautz, Jason, and Jeffrey Tomich. "States eye rescue of retiring coal plants." *E&E News*, March 7, 2024. <https://www.eenews.net/articles/states-eye-rescue-of-retiring-coal-plants/>.

¹²¹ "EEA Attendee List 7.26.23.xlsx." *American Legislative Exchange Council*, 2023.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24412267-co-sen-mark-baisley#document/p217>

¹²² Colman, Zack. "Utility group opposes challenge to endangerment finding." *E&E News/Politico*, December 6, 2017.

<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/1060068293>;

¹²³ Mufson, Steve and Tom Hamburger. "A battle is looming over renewable energy, and fossil fuel interests are losing."

Washington Post, April 25, 2014.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/a-battle-is-looming-over-renewable-energy-and-fossil-fuel-interests-are-losing/2014/04/25/24ed78e2-cb23-11e3-a75e-463587891b57_story.html; "American Legislative Exchange Council."

Energy and Policy Institute. <https://energyandpolicy.org/american-legislative-exchange-council/>.

¹²⁴ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax." *American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers*, 2022;

Kasper. "Peabody Energy Funding Climate Denial.;" Armiak, David. "ALEC's Funding Revealed." *Exposed by CMD*, July

25, 2023. <https://www.exposedbycmd.org/2023/07/25/alecs-funding-revealed/>.

[meeting](#) between anti-wind activists and special interest groups known for their climate denial and fossil fuel funding.¹²⁵ Later that year, members of the [anti-wind Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions](#) traveled to D.C. and met with Wynn and staff for Congressional leadership as part of a campaign against the wind production tax credit, [according to an AWED report-back document](#) showing how that coordination continued.¹²⁶

Americans for Prosperity

Americans for Prosperity (AFP), a group founded and controlled by Charles Koch, has long fought the transition to clean energy by campaigning against state and federal standards and subsidies that support wind and solar power.¹²⁷ Publicly, AFP has grounded those fights in a professed belief in limited government and free market values, which it also uses to justify its efforts to free the fossil fuel industry from government oversight and regulations aimed at protecting the environment and public health.

Despite its professed adherence to free-market ideology, AFP has at times [partnered with anti-wind activists](#) who want to use the power of government to limit or outright ban wind farms as part of AFP's campaigns to eliminate federal production tax credits that helped enable the last decade's growth in wind energy.¹²⁸ Koch Industries, meanwhile, hasn't been shy about [benefiting from government subsidies](#).¹²⁹

AFP [campaigned against](#) American Electric Power's Wind Catcher project, which would have resulted in construction of the nation's largest wind farm, in multiple states before the project was finally nixed by the Texas Public Utilities Commission.¹³⁰ AFP took [a victory lap](#) after AEP pulled the plug on the project.¹³¹

Caesar Rodney Institute

Based in Delaware, the [Caesar Rodney Institute](#) is currently spearheading a national campaign against offshore wind power.

¹²⁵ "Energy Advocates Conference."; Goldenberg, Suzanne. "Conservative think tanks step up attacks against Obama's clean energy strategy." *The Guardian*, May 8, 2012.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2012/may/08/conservative-thinktanks-obama-energy-plans>.

¹²⁶ Anderson. "George David Banks: Trump's climate advisor worked with anti-wind and climate skeptic groups."; Gerdes, Larry. "AWED December 2012 DC PTC Trip Report." *Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions*, December 19, 2012.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/3943784-AWED-December-2012-DC-PTC-Trip-Report>.

¹²⁷ Kasper, Matt. "Charles Koch Distorts the Facts: Here Are The Ways His Money & Political Network Prevent Clean Energy Businesses From Succeeding." *Energy and Policy Institute*, August 28, 2015.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/charles-koch-distorts-the-facts-prevents-clean-energy-businesses-from-succeeding/>.

¹²⁸ "Analysis: Americans for Prosperity Anti-Wind Letter, June 2014." *Energy and Policy Institute*. June 16, 2014.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/americans-for-prosperity-anti-wind-letter-analysis/>

¹²⁹ "Subsidy Tracker Parent Company Summary." *Good Jobs First*.

<https://subsidytracker.goodjobsfirst.org/parent/koch-industries>.

¹³⁰ Anderson. "Attacks on wind and solar power by the coal and gas industries."

¹³¹ "AFP Activists Pulled the Plug on Wind Catcher." *Americans for Prosperity*, July 31, 2018.

<https://americansforprosperity.org/blog/afp-activists-pulled-the-plug-on-wind-catcher/>.

CRI has received funding in recent years from the American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers and AFPM-funded American Energy Alliance.¹³²

CRI formed the American Coalition for Ocean Protection to raise money to support anti-offshore wind litigation. ACOP is a member of the Save the Whales Coalition, which also includes the [Heartland Institute](#) and Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, that's used billboards, aerial advertising, and protests to [spread disinformation](#) linking offshore wind development to beached whales.¹³³

EPI identified the [billionaire](#) du Pont family's Longwood Foundation as the source of nearly half of CRI's revenue in 2022, based on tax reports.¹³⁴ Thère du Pont is the Longwood Foundation's president and also [serves on the board of the DuPont Company](#), which sells a variety of products [used by coal, methane gas, and nuclear power plants](#) and in [oil and gas extraction](#).¹³⁵ The Longwood Foundation's [chairman, Charlie Copeland](#), a member of the du Pont family, is also Director of CRI's Center for Analysis of Delaware's Economy & Government Spending.¹³⁶

Another family member, Ben du Pont, [chaired](#) a 2023 fundraiser for CRI's anti-offshore wind campaign.¹³⁷

Heading up CRI's anti-offshore campaign is [David Stevenson](#), a former employee of the DuPont Company, who also works as a paid consultant for utilities and large energy users.¹³⁸ Stevenson said he keeps the names of clients of his consulting firm Alternative Strategies Consulting confidential while [under examination in a lawsuit](#) where he and several others challenged Delaware's implementation of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.¹³⁹ Stevenson and the other plaintiffs presented themselves as customers of Delmarva Electric Cooperative and Delmarva Power in the lawsuit.

¹³² "Caesar Rodney Institute: State Policy Network attacks on offshore wind power." *Energy and Policy Institute*, 2024. <https://energyandpolicy.org/caesar-rodney-institute-offshore-wind/>

¹³³ Anderson. "Fossil fuel money behind anti-offshore wind ads in New Jersey."

¹³⁴ "Caesar Rodney Institute: State Policy Network attacks on offshore wind power." *Energy and Policy Institute*.; "Du Pont Family." *Forbes*, February 8, 2024 <https://www.forbes.com/profile/du-pont/?list=families>

¹³⁵ "DuPont Board." *DuPont*.

<https://www.investors.dupont.com/investors/dupont-investors/corporate-governance/dupont-board/default.aspx>; "Power Generation." *DuPont*. <https://www.dupont.com/water/applications/power-generation.html>; "Unconventional Oil & Gas." *DuPont*. <https://www.dupont.com/water/applications/unconventional-oil-and-gas.html>.

¹³⁶ "CRI Team Charlie Copeland." *Caesar Rodney Institute*.

<https://www.caesarrodney.org/CRI-team/Charlie-Copeland.htm>.

¹³⁷ "Protecting Delaware's Coastal Beauty." *Caesar Rodney Institute*, 2023.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24400337-invite-to-caesar-rodney-institute-anti-offshore-wind-dinner-honoring-david-stevenson-and-geoffrey-pohanka-from-2023>.

¹³⁸ "Caesar Rodney Institute: State Policy Network attacks on offshore wind power." *Energy and Policy Institute*.

¹³⁹ Quinn, Christine L. "Transcript of Trial - Volume B." Official court reporter transcript filed on January 12, 2018 in case S13C-12-025 RFS before the Superior Court of the State Delaware.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24400740-david-t-stevenson-et-al-v-delaware-department-of-natural-resources-trial-transcript>

Energy and Environment Legal Institute

The Energy and Environment Legal Institute (E&E Legal), formerly known as the American Tradition Institute (ATI) and Western Tradition Institute, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization currently led by three veterans of fossil fuel industry campaigns against climate science: [Steve Milloy](#), [Craig Richardson](#), and [Greg Walcher](#).¹⁴⁰

In 2023, multiple opinion pieces by Milloy claiming that offshore wind projects kill whales were published in the [Daily Caller](#) and [New York Sun](#), and he was interviewed by the [New York Post](#) on the same topic.¹⁴¹

E&E Legal [raised just over \\$2 million in 2022](#) and paid \$500,000 to Milloy and \$125,000 to Richardson for contractual services.¹⁴² \$943,000 of that money E&E Legal raised that year [came from DonorsTrust](#).¹⁴³

Milloy [previously worked as director of government affairs for Murray Energy](#), and E&E Legal has financial ties to the coal industry.¹⁴⁴ Coal producers [Peabody Energy](#) and [Arch Coal](#) disclosed funding for E&E Legal during their bankruptcies in 2016.¹⁴⁵

David Schnare of E&E Legal joined an attorney from the Civitas Institute (a State Policy Network group that merged with the John Locke Foundation in 2021), in [representing opponents of the Amazon Wind Farm](#) in North Carolina in [a lawsuit from 2015-2016](#).¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ "Steve Milloy." *DeSmog*. <https://www.desmog.com/steve-milloy/>; "Craig Richardson." *DeSmog*. <https://www.desmog.com/craig-richardson/>; "Greg Walcher." *DeSmog*. <https://www.desmog.com/greg-walcher/>.

¹⁴¹ Milloy, Steve. "STEVE MILLOY: The New Green Activists Would Rather Save The Windmills Than Save The Whales." *Daily Caller*, April 26, 2023;

<https://dailycaller.com/2023/04/26/opinion-the-new-green-activists-would-rather-save-the-windmills-than-save-the-whales-steve-milloy/>; Milloy, Steve. "'License To Kill' Whales, Dolphins Handed to Offshore Wind Power Companies in Biden's Green Energy Push." *The Sun*, April 12, 2023.

<https://www.nysun.com/article/license-to-kill-whales-dolphins-handed-to-offshore-wind-power-companies-in-bidens-green-energy-push/>; Christenson, Josh. "Conservative watchdogs highlight 'alarming' surge in whale deaths as wind farms grow off NY, NJ coasts." *New York Post*, April 23, 2023.

<https://nypost.com/2023/04/23/conservative-watchdogs-highlight-alarming-surge-in-whale-deaths-as-wind-farms-grow-off-ny-nj-coasts/>.

¹⁴² "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax." *Energy and Environment Legal Institute*, 2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/264239065/202332899349303093/full>

¹⁴³ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax." *Donors Trust*, 2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/522166327/202323049349300742/full>;

¹⁴⁴ "Steve Milloy." *DeSmog*. <https://www.desmog.com/steve-milloy/>

¹⁴⁵ Goldman, Gretchen. "Peabody Energy Discloses Extensive Payments to Climate Denial Groups." *Union of Concerned Scientists*, June 30, 2016.

<https://blog.ucsus.org/gretchen-goldman/peabody-energy-discloses-extensive-payments-to-climate-denial-groups/>;

Fitzgerald, Patrick. "Arch Coal Made \$10,000 Gift to Energy & Environment Legal." *Wall Street Journal*, March 11, 2016.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/BL-BANKB-21830>.

¹⁴⁶ Engstrom, Elliot. "Fact-checking the N&O." *Civitas Institute*, December 16, 2015.

<https://www.nccivitas.org/civitas-review/fact-checking-the-no/>; "OWENS V. DEQ." *Civitas Institute*.

<https://www.nccivitas.org/clf/clf-litigation-library/owens-v-deq/>.

ATI [named](#) coal producer Alpha Natural Resources as a member in 2012 in a declaration by ATI's then-executive director [Tom Tanton](#) that was filed in a Colorado lawsuit where the group targeted the state's renewable energy standard.¹⁴⁷ Tanton is [currently listed](#) as E&E Legal's Director of Science and Technology Assessment.¹⁴⁸

Tanton said in his 2012 declaration that ATI's membership included unnamed "electric power generating and transmission companies that generate energy from coal, natural gas and oil-fired and combustion turbine generation facilities."

Also in 2012, a judge in Montana [ordered the release of bank records](#) from the American Tradition Partnership (previously known as the Western Tradition Partnership), the now defunct 501(c)(4) arm of ATI.¹⁴⁹ ProPublica [made public](#) copies of some \$1.1 million in checks to the 501(c)(4).¹⁵⁰ EPI searched through the checks while preparing this report. Among them was a \$25,000 payment from the Intermountain Rural Electric Association and smaller contributions from the Montana & Wyoming Oil Company and Peak Energy Resources.

A group called Americans for Job Security [contributed just over \\$70,000](#) to the American Tradition Partnership (ATP) sometime between November 2011 and October 2012, during which time ATP participated in ATI's lawsuit against Colorado's voter-approved renewable energy standard.¹⁵¹ Years later, in 2019, Americans for Job Security was [forced to reveal its funding](#) for 2010-2012 due to a campaign finance complaint and lawsuit brought by Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.¹⁵² The funding [included](#) millions of dollars from oil and gas producers Continental Resources and Devon Energy paid in 2012.¹⁵³

Anti-renewables activists John Droz and Kevon Martis have both served as fellows for ATI/E&E Legal. In February of 2012, Droz and Martis [participated](#) in a coordinating meeting between anti-wind activists from multiple states and representatives of ATI and other national groups backed by fossil fuel money.¹⁵⁴ Droz also helped [draft](#) a proposal for a national public relations

¹⁴⁷ Tanton, Thomas. "Declaration of Thomas Tanton in support of plaintiff's response to defendant-intervenors' motion to dismiss." Filed in case No. 11-cv-00859-WJM-KLM before the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado on March 8, 2012.
<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24484381-untitled#document/p19>

¹⁴⁸ "Senior Leadership." *Energy and Environment Legal Institute*. <https://eelegal.org/senior-leadership/>

¹⁴⁹ Barker, Kim. "Dark Money Group's Bank Records Suggest Ties to Campaign Work." *ProPublica*, November 2, 2012.
<https://www.propublica.org/article/dark-money-groups-bank-records-suggest-ties-to-campaign-work>.

¹⁵⁰ Barker, Kim. "Check 'Em Out: Donations to Dark Money Group Revealed." *ProPublica*, November 8, 2012.
<https://www.propublica.org/article/check-em-out-donations-to-dark-money-group-revealed>

¹⁵¹ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax." *Americans for Job Security*, 2011.
https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/522062978/2013_11_EO%2F52-2062978_990O_201210.

¹⁵² Libowitz, Jordan. "CREW exposes dark money donors including Thiel, DeVos and Adelson." *Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington*, October 25, 2019.
<https://www.citizensforethics.org/news/press-releases/crew-exposes-dark-money-donors-including-thiel-devos-and-adelson/>.

¹⁵³ Stephen Demura, correspondence on behalf of Americans for Job Security with attached financial records filed in Federal Elections Commission case MUR 6538R on October 24, 2019.
<https://www.citizensforethics.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/2019/10/AJS-disclosure.pdf>

¹⁵⁴ "Energy Advocates Conference."

campaign against wind power in advance of the meeting.¹⁵⁵ The proposal called for anti-wind activists to join forces with established national groups like ATI and the Heartland Institute.

Other anti-wind activists in attendance included Audra Parker of the Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound that fought the Cape Wind project, which sought to build the nation's first offshore wind farm before it was abandoned after years of litigation and opposition. The Alliance's founders and leadership [included Bill Koch of Oxbow Carbon](#).¹⁵⁶

Another participant in the 2012 meeting was longtime ATI/E&E Legal fellow [George Taylor](#), who is the founder of Palmetto Energy Research, where "his focus has been on the costs and environmental impacts of all leading choices for the generation of electricity."¹⁵⁷ The IRS automatically revoked Palmetto Energy Research's status in 2019 due to failure to file annual Form 990s.¹⁵⁸

Taylor [listed](#) relationships with ATI, the Heartland Institute, Institute for Energy Research, and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in a document that accompanied the 2012 meeting.¹⁵⁹ Taylor [currently serves](#) as treasurer and secretary on the board of directors for the anti-wind National Wind Watch.¹⁶⁰

Heartland Institute

The Heartland Institute is a think tank with a long history of [virulent](#) disinformation campaigns denying the dangers of everything from [second-hand tobacco smoke](#) to pollution from burning fossil fuels.¹⁶¹

Linnea Luekin of the Heartland Institute recently [called for 2-mile setbacks for wind turbines](#) in an appearance last month before state lawmakers in West Virginia.¹⁶² Heartland is also [currently part](#)

¹⁵⁵ Elsner, Gabe. "Confidential Documents Reveal Fossil Fuel-Funded Organizations Coordinating With Local Anti-Wind Groups." *Energy and Policy Institute*, May 10, 2012.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/anti-wind-groups-coordinate-with-fossil-fuel-funded-organizations/>

¹⁵⁶ Seelye, Katharine Q. "Koch Brother Wages 12-Year Fight Over Wind Farm." *New York Times*, October 22, 2013.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/23/us/koch-brother-wages-12-year-fight-over-wind-farm.html>.

¹⁵⁷ "Fellows & Advisors." *American Tradition Institute*, 2012.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20120509173924/http://www.atinstitute.org/about/fellows-and-advisors/>

¹⁵⁸ "Palmetto Energy Research Foundation." *IRS*, August 12, 2019.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24803091-palmetto-energy-research-foundation-irs-profile>

¹⁵⁹ "Energy Advocates Conference."

¹⁶⁰ "Business Entity Summary National Wind Watch." *Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*,

2024. <https://corp.sec.state.ma.us/CorpWeb/CorpSearch/CorpSummary.aspx?sysvalue=cWr8yBhncQ.yfni5shHtYDcM0qja k9A3ikizGWSTGeM->

¹⁶¹ Goldenberg, Suzanne. "Big donors ditch rightwing Heartland Institute over Unabomber billboard." *The Guardian*, May 9, 2012. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2012/may/09/heartland-institute-donors-lost-unabomber-ad>; "Scientific Evidence Shows Secondhand Smoke Is No Danger." *Heartland Institute*, July 1, 2008.

<https://heartland.org/opinion/scientific-evidence-shows-secondhand-smoke-is-no-danger/>

¹⁶² Tony, Mike. "WV House panel oks bill that wind industry rep calls 'extreme' and 'anti-business'." *Charleston Gazette-Mail*, February 17, 2024.

https://www.wvgazette.com/news/legislative_session/wv-house-panel-oks-bill-that-wind-industry-rep-calls-extreme-and-anti-business/article_8c364975-30b9-59ab-8580-5cd191eb36cc.html.

of the [Save the Whales Coalition](#) that was behind anti-offshore-wind aerial and billboard ads in Atlantic City, New Jersey, in 2023.¹⁶³

Multiple Heartland policy advisors [testified against a proposed solar farm in Spotsylvania, Virginia](#), that became the target of negative attacks by an echo chamber of groups backed by the fossil fuel industry and right-wing media sources.¹⁶⁴

During a 2010 podcast interview with James Taylor of the Heartland Institute, Ohio anti-wind activist Tom Stacy [described](#) Taylor and others from Heartland as part of a network of experts who help to recruit anti-wind activists to testify before state lawmakers and review their testimony before it is delivered.¹⁶⁵ Heartland has for years promoted the views of anti-renewables activists like [Stacy](#), [John Droz](#), [Kevon Martis](#), and [Lisa Linowes](#).¹⁶⁶

In 2022, the Heartland Institute [received \\$1.26 million from DonorsTrust](#), continuing a [trend](#) of a significant portion of Heartland's funding coming from a single dark money source.¹⁶⁷

EPI spotted that Heartland [received](#) \$45,000 between 2019 and 2022 from the foundation named after deceased oil man Ken W. Davis, which is now led by his son T. Cullen Davis.¹⁶⁸ Davis did not respond to an email from EPI requesting comment on the foundation's funding of the Heartland Institute.

Murray Energy had to disclose [\\$130,000 in 2018 payments to Heartland](#) in a bankruptcy case filing.¹⁶⁹ Internal [Heartland documents](#) made public by DeSmog had previously revealed Murray Energy also paid \$100,000 to the group in 2010.¹⁷⁰ Heartland also [received \\$75,000](#) from the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers in 2017.¹⁷¹

¹⁶³ "Caesar Rodney Institute: State Policy Network attacks on offshore wind power." *Energy and Policy Institute*.

¹⁶⁴ Anderson, Dave. "Major solar project in Spotsylvania targeted by climate skeptics, fossil fuel interests." *Energy and Policy Institute*, February 26, 2019. <https://energyandpolicy.org/spotsylvania-solar/>.

¹⁶⁵ Anderson. "Tom Stacy: A top anti-wind activist who got paid by a fossil fuel funded group."

¹⁶⁶ "Wisconsin May Mandate Larger Setbacks for Wind Turbines." *Heartland Institute*, March 14, 2011.

<https://heartland.org/opinion/wisconsin-may-mandate-larger-setbacks-for-wind-turbines/>; "John Droz, ICC7." *Heartland Institute*, 2012. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gffbO2Yd9XQ>; Noon, Marita. "Get Ready to Break Wind." *Heartland Institute*, October 24, 2016. <https://heartland.org/opinion/get-ready-to-break-wind/>; Fojtik, Brian. "Bird Conservancy Sues Feds for Wind Turbine Information." *Heartland Institute*, August 9, 2012.

<https://heartland.org/opinion/bird-conservancy-sues-feds-for-wind-turbine-information/>.

¹⁶⁷ "Form 990 Annual return for organization exempt from income tax." *Donors Trust*, 2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/522166327/202323049349300742/full>; "Donors Trust: The shadow operation that has laundered \$146 million in climate-denial funding." *Greenpeace*.

¹⁶⁸ "Form 990-PF Return of Private Foundation." *Ken W. Davis Foundation*, 2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/756012722/202321319349104037/IRS990PF>.

¹⁶⁹ Friedman. "A Coal Baron Funded Climate Denial as His Company Spiraled Into Bankruptcy."

¹⁷⁰ Heartland Institute. "2012 Fundraising Plan." *DeSmog*.

https://www.desmog.com/wp-content/uploads/files/%281-15-2012%29%202012%20Fundraising%20Plan_0.pdf.

¹⁷¹ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax." *American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers*, 2017.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/530115970/201801029349300205/IRS99>.

Institute for Energy Research

The Institute for Energy Research has spent over a decade developing a network of anti-renewables activists that it has [promoted via its blog MasterResource](#) and worked with to oppose clean energy policies and spread disinformation about cleantech.¹⁷²

Currently listed as principals or contributors on the blog are influential anti-renewables activists [John Droz](#) of the Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions, Sherri Lange of the North American Platform Against Wind, [Lisa Linowes](#) of the Industrial Wind Action Group, and [Kevon Martis](#) of Our Home Our Voice and Citizens for Local Choice.¹⁷³

MasterResource.org has served as an echo chamber for disinformation about renewables that's already been thoroughly debunked by fact checkers. In 2019, [IER's blog featured a post by Lange](#) that attempted to defend President Donald Trump's widely [lampped false](#) claim that noise from wind turbines can cause cancer.¹⁷⁴

Robert Bradley, the founder and CEO of IER, [responded](#) to an EPI blog post that highlighted the State Policy Network's decision to make preventing states from adopting wind and solar power a top state legislative priority for 2024.¹⁷⁵ Bradley included excerpts from EPI's post that mentioned Martis, Charles and Bill Koch, the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers, and multiple SPN think tanks, among others, and then wrote:

These aforementioned groups and individuals (and many more) are standing tall against the Climate Industrial Complex and Big Government Wind, Big Governmental Solar, Big Government Batteries, and the I-want-to-control-your-energy-life elitists. The real environmentalists speak from the grassroots, not from Washington, D.C.

In 2019, EPI [identified](#) the American Energy Alliance as the starting point of an attack on a Budweiser Super Bowl ad that focused on the beer company's procurement of wind power, an attack that was then echoed by the Kentucky Coal Association and anti-wind activists like Martis.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² "Category Archives: Grassroots opposition, windpower." *MasterResource*.

<https://www.masterresource.org/category/grassroots-opposition/>.

¹⁷³ "About." *MasterResource*. <https://www.masterresource.org/about/>.

¹⁷⁴ Anderson. "Trump's false claim about windmills, noise and cancer defended by Koch-backed blog.": Winkelman, Natalia. "Trump's Anti-Windmill Crusade Has Been Going on Longer Than You'd Expect." *Slate*, April 4, 2019. <https://slate.com/culture/2019/04/trump-windmills-trevor-noah-daily-show.html>; McDonald, Jessica. "Trump's Faulty Wind Power Claims." *FactCheck.org*, April 4, 2019.. <https://www.factcheck.org/2019/04/trumps-faulty-wind-power-claims/>.

¹⁷⁵ Bradley, Robert. "Market Environmentalists vs. Wind/Solar/Battery Industrialization, Sprawl." *MasterResource*, March 7, 2024. <https://www.masterresource.org/free-market-environmentalism/free-market-vs-wind-solar-industrialization-sprawl/>.

¹⁷⁶ Anderson, Dave. "Budweiser's pro-wind power Super Bowl ad attacked by fossil fuel industry." *Energy and Policy Institute*, February 1, 2019. <https://energyandpolicy.org/budweiser-wind-power-ad/>

In 2018, EPI [documented](#) Ohio anti-wind activist Tom Stacy's transformation from an unpaid anti-wind activist into a paid consultant who co-authored anti-renewables reports for IER and the coal industry group America's Power.¹⁷⁷

In 2017, EPI [found](#) the name of a former IER employee listed as the "author" in the document properties of a sign-on letter opposing the wind production tax credit that Linowes claimed she wrote alone.¹⁷⁸

Bradley celebrated the eighth anniversary of MasterResource in a [2016 blog](#).¹⁷⁹

"A whole new cast has come on board at MasterResource since then, particularly with the grassroots talent fighting against industrial wind turbines," Bradley wrote. "The more than 200 contributors to MasterResource indicates the great growth of the free-market movement in the (Obama) Era of Energy Peril."

The American Energy Alliance, the advocacy arm of IER, [received \\$200,000 from AFPM](#) in 2022.¹⁸⁰ AFPM's board of directors was chaired that year by Jeff Ramsey, the CEO of the Koch Industries subsidiary Flint Hill Resources.

Bradley [co-founded](#) an IER predecessor group in Texas with Charles Koch during the 1990s.¹⁸¹ IER received [funding from the Koch network until around 2020](#), but Koch nonprofits haven't disclosed direct contributions to IER in their annual tax reports in more recent years.¹⁸²

The coal industry has supplied additional funding. Peabody Energy had to [disclose \\$50,000 in funding](#) for IER during its bankruptcy, and [Alpha Natural Resources](#) and [Cloud Peak Energy](#) listed IER as a creditor in their bankruptcies.¹⁸³

Protect Our Pocketbooks

¹⁷⁷ Anderson. "Tom Stacy: A top anti-wind activist got paid by a fossil fuel funded group."

¹⁷⁸ Anderson, Dave. 2017. "Who's behind a letter asking Congress to end the wind production tax credit?" *Energy and Policy Institute*, December 11, 2017. <https://energyandpolicy.org/wind-ptc-letter-congress/>.

¹⁷⁹ Bradley, Robert. "An Eight-Year Anniversary." *MasterResource*, December 28, 2016.

<https://www.masterresource.org/masterresource-blog-history/eight-year-anniversary-masterresource-founded-december-26-2008/>

¹⁸⁰ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax." *American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers*, 2022. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/262731617/202332659349300333/full>.

¹⁸¹ Kasper, Matt. "Koch Brothers Attack Clean Energy." *Energy and Policy Institute*, August 28, 2015.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/charles-koch-distorts-the-facts-prevents-clean-energy-businesses-from-succeeding/>.

¹⁸² "Institute for Energy Research Funding." *Desmog*, November 21, 2023.

<https://www.desmog.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Institute-for-Energy-Research-Funding-2023-Desmog-Final.xlsx>.

¹⁸³ Kasper. "Peabody Energy Funding Climate Denial.;" Fang, Lee. "Giant Coal Company Bankruptcy Reveals Secret Ties to Climate Denial, GOP Dark Money Groups." *The Intercept*, August 25, 2015.

<https://theintercept.com/2015/08/25/coal-giant-bankruptcy-reveals-secret-ties-republican-dark-money-groups/>; Fang, Lee. 2019. "Bankrupt Coal Company Funded Climate Change Denialism." *The Intercept*, May 16, 2019.

<https://theintercept.com/2019/05/16/coal-industry-climate-change-denial-cloud-peak-energy/>.

[Protect Our Pocketbooks](#) is a 501(c)(4) organization whose stated mission is “educating consumers and policymakers about the importance of sensible energy policies that protect the consumer and work for local communities.”¹⁸⁴

It [raised and spent more than \\$1.7 million attacking the Wind Catcher project](#) in 2018, and has undertaken no public-facing activities in the years since.¹⁸⁵ The group’s only officer is Justin Allen, an attorney and lobbyist for Wright Lindsay Jennings, whose clients have included some smaller oil and gas producers and the coal producer Murray Energy.

Protect Our Pocketbooks also employed two other lobbying firms with clients in the fossil fuel industry in Louisiana.

State Policy Network

The national [State Policy Network](#) organization sits atop a 50-state network of affiliated think tanks and associated advocacy groups behind multiple disinformation campaigns attacking state and federal clean energy and climate policies.¹⁸⁶

SPN groups often present themselves as free market advocates opposed to state and federal clean energy laws and subsidies based on libertarian values and principles of limited government. Conversely, SPN members like the [Caesar Rodney Institute](#), [Civitas Institute](#), and [Texas Public Policy Foundation](#) have fought to use the powers of government to block deployment of renewable energy.¹⁸⁷

Another SPN group, the Center for the American Experiment, published a report trumpeting local government bans and moratoriums by anti-renewable-energy gadfly Robert Bryce in 2021.¹⁸⁸ The Center received \$20,000 from Americans for Prosperity that year.

In 2024, SPN for the first time publicly [identified](#) preventing states from adopting intermittent sources of electricity like wind and solar power as a top state legislative priority.¹⁸⁹ The move sparked divisions within SPN’s membership, as evidenced by the Show Me Institute opposing new Missouri legislation that would [impose total land use limits on solar farms](#).¹⁹⁰

SPN’s single largest source of revenue for many years has been dark money groups like DonorsTrust and Donors Capital Fund, so it can be difficult to trace much of the money going into SPN back to the original source. What is known about the money trail behind SPN and its members has made the network synonymous with Koch [funding](#) and [influence](#).¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁴ Anderson. “Opponents of the Wind Catcher project have ties to fossil fuel interests, Hawthorn Group.”

¹⁸⁵ Anderson. “ExxonMobil attacks wind power, carbon tax in Texas.”

¹⁸⁶ “State Policy Network: Political attacks on wind and solar power.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, 2024.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/state-policy-network-attacks-renewable-energy/>

¹⁸⁷ “Owens v. DEQ.” *Civitas Institute*.

¹⁸⁸ Anderson. “Blocking renewable energy is a top state legislative priority for network of pro-fossil fuels think tanks.”

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Frank. “Limiting Solar Farming?”

¹⁹¹ Armiak. “Charles Koch’s “Stand Together” Donor Conduits Move \$176 Million into his Network, Higher Education, and Right-Wing Policy, Advocacy, Litigation, and Media Groups in 2022.”; Armiak, David. “State Policy Network 2019 Annual

Unredacted lists of major donors found in copies of SPN's [2010](#) and [2019](#) IRS tax reports included contributions of \$100,000 and \$700,000 from Karen Buchwald Wright, then the CEO of [Ariel Corporation](#).¹⁹²

Peabody Energy had to [disclose about \\$50,000 in funding](#) for SPN in its bankruptcy.¹⁹³

Republican Governors Association

The Republican Governors Association targeted Maine's Democratic Governor Janet Mills with [anti-offshore wind messages](#) in 2021 and 2022, both [directly](#) and through its 501(c)(4) affiliate State Solutions Inc.¹⁹⁴

RGA used concerns about offshore wind raised by Maine's iconic lobster industry to attack Mills and support former Republican Gov. Paul LePage's comeback bid, but voters stuck with Mills.

Republican State Leadership Committee

The RSLC is a 527 group that describes itself as the largest organization of Republican state leaders in the country.

In 2023, the RSLC targeted New Jersey's off-year state legislative elections with anti-offshore wind ads that echoed bogus claims about beached whales. EPI reviewed an RSLC report to the IRS that covered the first half of the year and [found hundreds of thousands of dollars in contributions from fossil fuel interests](#), including Koch Industries, Marathon Petroleum, Devon Energy, Ovontiv, EQT, CNX Resources, the American Petroleum Institute, Energy Transfer, and Consol Energy.¹⁹⁵

More recently, the RSLC belatedly filed an [amended report](#) to the IRS covering the latter half of 2023, which included the time period when the group undertook the bulk of its anti-offshore wind campaign targeting of Democratic state lawmakers.¹⁹⁶ The amended report included contributions from the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers, Chevron, Energy Transfer, ExxonMobil, Marathon, API, Koch Industries, the National Mining Association, and coal industry associations in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Meeting Attendee List." *Exposed by CMD*, October 31, 2019.

<https://www.exposedbycmd.org/featured-documents/state-policy-network-2019-annual-meeting-attendee-list/>.

¹⁹² "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax." *State Policy Network*, 2010; "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax." *State Policy Network*, 2019.

¹⁹³ Kasper. "Peabody Energy Funding Climate Change Denial and Anti-Renewable Campaigns."

¹⁹⁴ Anderson, Dave. "NextEra spent \$20 million to "ban" clean energy transmission project in Maine." *Energy and Policy Institute*, November 3, 2021.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/nextera-spent-20-million-to-ban-clean-energy-transmission-project-in-maine/>; "Mills & Biden team up to destroy lobster industry." *Republican Governors Association*, April 30, 2021.

<https://www.rga.org/mills-biden-team-destroy-lobster-industry/>;

¹⁹⁵ Anderson. "Fossil fuel money lurks behind anti-offshore wind power political ads in New Jersey."

¹⁹⁶ "Political Organization Report of Contributions and Expenditures." *Republican State Leadership Committee*, February 14, 2024.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24528080-rslc-8872-report-to-the-irs-for-july-to-december-2023-amended>

Texas Public Policy Foundation

In 2022, the [New York Times](#) published an in-depth story on the Texas Public Policy Foundation's national crusade against clean energy and climate action.¹⁹⁷ The think tank has [used disinformation about offshore wind turbines killing whales to fundraise and filed a lawsuit](#) to block an offshore wind project based on similar false claims.¹⁹⁸

In 2022, EPI [traced](#) misleading claims that renewables were to blame for the Texas blackouts during 2021's Winter Storm Uri back to TPPF.¹⁹⁹ In reality, the blackouts were predominantly caused by widespread failures of the methane gas system in Texas and long-term failures to winterize the state's power grid despite previous blackouts during periods of extreme cold.²⁰⁰

Lisa Linowes, a New Hampshire-based anti-renewables activist, has [served as a senior policy fellow for TPPF](#).²⁰¹ Linowes authored a [two-part anti-wind-power report](#) for TPPF in 2018.²⁰²

TPPF has [received millions of dollars from Koch network-affiliated nonprofits](#) in recent years, and most of the group's board members make money from the fossil fuel industry.²⁰³

EPI found \$750,000 in contributions to the Texas Public Policy Foundation in [annual IRS Form 990s filed by the foundation of Joseph Craft](#), the CEO and chairman of fossil fuel producer [Alliance Resource Partners](#), for the years 2020-2022.²⁰⁴

TPPF has also received just over \$2 million since 2011 from the [Brigham Family Foundation](#), which is led by Ben "Bud" Brigham of Brigham Exploration Company, an oil and gas company based in Texas.²⁰⁵ \$837,000 of that money has been earmarked for TPPF's [Life:Powered Initiative](#), a pro-fossil fuels and anti-renewables campaign, in the Brigham Family Foundation's annual tax filings since 2017.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁷ Gelles, David. "The Texas Group Waging a National Crusade Against Climate Action." *New York Times*, updated June 20, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/04/climate/texas-public-policy-foundation-climate-change.html>;

¹⁹⁸ "Texas Public Policy Foundation: State Policy Network attacks on renewable energy in the Lonestar State." *Energy and Policy Institute*.

¹⁹⁹ Benschoff, Laura. "Renewable energy is maligned by misinformation. It's a distraction, experts say." *NPR*, August 24, 2022. <https://www.npr.org/2022/08/24/1110850169/misinformation-renewable-energy-gop-climate>.

²⁰⁰ Usero, Adriana, and Salvador Rizzo. "Analysis | 'Frozen windmills' aren't to blame for Texas's power failure."

Washington Post, February 18, 2022.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/02/18/frozen-windmills-arent-blame-texas-power-failure-neither-is-green-new-deal/>.

²⁰¹ Anderson. "Attacks on wind and solar power by the coal and gas industries."

²⁰² Linowes, Lisa. "The Texas Wind Power Story: Part 1." *Texas Public Policy Foundation*, May 2018.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24807259-2018-04-rr-texaswindpowerstorypart1-acee-lisalinowes>; Linowes,

Lisa. 2018. "The Texas Wind Power Story, Part 2." *Texas Public Policy Foundation*, July 2018.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24807258-2018-06-rr-texaswindpowerstorypart2-acee-lisalinowes>.

²⁰³ "Texas Public Policy Foundation: State Policy Network attacks on renewable energy in the Lonestar State." *Energy and Policy Institute*.

²⁰⁴ "Form 990 Return of Private Foundation." *Joseph W Craft III Foundation*, forms for fiscal years 2020-2022.

²⁰⁵ "Form 990 Return of Private Foundation." *Brigham Family Foundation*, forms for fiscal years 2011-2022.

²⁰⁶ Anderson, "Video shows FERC nominee Bernard McNamee's bias against renewable energy."

Anti-Renewable-Energy Activists and Operatives

John Droz

Realtor John Droz [resides](#) in North Carolina and maintains a summer cottage in upstate New York.²⁰⁷ Based on undergraduate and graduate degrees in physics and some work earlier in his career for General Electric, Droz has presented himself as a scientific expert on a wide range of issues.

He's emerged as an influential source of conspiracy theories and disinformation about everything from [climate science](#) and [wind](#) and [solar power](#) to [Covid-19](#) and [the 2020 elections](#).²⁰⁸

Droz is [a member of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's Oil and Gas Commission](#).²⁰⁹ In 2018, he [self-published a paper](#) that was supportive of offshore drilling for oil and methane gas off North Carolina's coast.²¹⁰

"Offshore wind energy is a much worse choice than is offshore natural gas," Droz wrote in the paper.

He's also a member of the [CO2 Coalition](#), formerly known as the George Marshall Institute, a climate denial group that has received money from the Koch network and oil and gas producer EOG Resources.²¹¹

Droz co-founded the Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions (AWED) [with Ohio anti-wind activist Tom Stacy](#) more than a decade ago.²¹² AWED and Droz have provided [model local laws, strategies](#), and information utilized by [anti-renewables activists](#) all over the country.²¹³

²⁰⁷ John Droz. "John Droz, Jr. Casual CV." *Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions*, July 1, 2023. https://wiseenergy.org/Energy/JohnDroz_Energy_CV.pdf

²⁰⁸ Borden, James. "The Man Who Makes Sea Level Rise Go Away." *Scientific American*, September 30, 2013. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-man-who-makes-sea-lev/>; Goldenberg, "Conservative think tanks step up attacks against Obama's clean energy strategy."; Green. "How misinformation about solar power hinders the fight against climate change."; Droz, John. "COVID-19: Science-Based Information." <https://www.c19science.info/>; Droz, John. "Promoting American Election Integrity." <https://election-integrity.info/>.

²⁰⁹ "Oil and Gas Commission Members." *North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality*. <https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/boards-and-commissions/nc-oil-and-gas-commission/oil-and-gas-commission-members>.

²¹⁰ Droz, John Jr. "Offshore Fossil Fuel Exploration and Development: A Review Of Some Concerns." *Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions*, April 28, 2018. https://wiseenergy.org/Energy/Offshore/Off-shore_Drilling.pdf.

²¹¹ Waldman, Scott. "Trump adviser created group to defend CO2." *E&E News*, February 28, 2019. <https://www.eenews.net/articles/trump-adviser-created-group-to-defend-co2/>.

²¹² Anderson. "Tom Stacy: A top anti-wind activist who got paid by a fossil fuel funded group."

²¹³ Anderson, Dave. "Who's behind overblown claims about Fort Drum and wind farms?" *Energy and Policy Institute*, October 2, 2017. <https://energyandpolicy.org/fort-drum-wind-power-radar-claims/>; Droz, John. "Solar Plan of Action." *ElectionIntegrity.info*, December 12, 2023. https://election-integrity.info/Energy/Solar_Plan.pdf; Thomas, Michael. "The Man Who Is Teaching Thousands of People How to Block Clean Energy Projects." *Distilled*, November 4, 2022. <https://www.distilled.earth/p/the-man-who-is-teaching-thousands>.

A “[Potpourri](#)” section of AWED’s website [wiseenergy.org](#) lists individuals “who contributed constructive ideas for this website,” including:²¹⁴

- Rob Aliasso, an [outspoken opponent of wind power](#) in upstate New York who served as co-chairman of the Coalition for the Preservation of the Golden Crescent, and spent more than three decades as an executive at Stebbins Manufacturing and Engineering, which saw its [coal scrubber business decline](#) amidst the transition to cleaner forms of energy²¹⁵
- Charles Battig, a climate denier associated with the [Heartland Institute](#) and [CO2 Coalition](#)²¹⁶
- Steve Goreham, a [paid speaker](#) and climate denier whose [clients](#) have included numerous fossil fuel industry groups²¹⁷
- Jonathan Lesser, a [fellow for the Manhattan Institute](#) and [Texas Public Policy Foundation](#) and economic consultant whose [clients](#) have included gas utilities, pipeline companies, and Bill Koch’s Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound²¹⁸
- George Taylor, a fellow for the [Energy and Environment Legal Institute](#)

Since 2009, AWED has published a monthly newsletter that’s frequently cross-posted on the Institute for Energy Research’s blog [MasterResource.org](#), where Droz is listed as a principal contributor.²¹⁹

In 2011, Droz [announced in the newsletter](#) that he’d joined the [American Tradition Institute](#) as a fellow.²²⁰ He would later describe the position as unpaid.²²¹

“ATI has some great aspirations, and getting rid of unscientific options like wind energy is high on their list,” Droz wrote.

²¹⁴ “Potpourri.” *Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions*. <https://wiseenergy.org/potpourri/>

²¹⁵ Booker, Ted. “Demand for coal scrubbers down.” *NNY360*, March 15, 2016.

https://www.nny360.com/news/demand-for-coal-scrubbers-down/article_38e40fd6-d212-5983-a4b2-c3da933d6d55.html;

Aliasso, Robert, letter the editor. “Letter: Utility surcharges unfair to citizens.” *Times Union*, September 11, 2017.

<https://www.timesunion.com/opinion/article/Letter-Utility-surcharges-unfair-to-citizens-12189112.php>; Morelli, Marie.

“Windmills stir up a storm in Cape Vincent.” *Syracuse.com*, February 14, 2010.

https://www.syracuse.com/news/2010/02/windmills_stir_up_a_storm_in_c.html

²¹⁶ “Charles Battig.” *Heartland Institute*. <https://heartland.org/about-us/who-we-are/charles-battig/>; “Leadership.” *CO2 Coalition*. <https://co2coalition.org/about/>

²¹⁷ Kowalski. “Anonymously funded group stokes local opposition to Ohio solar project.”; “Comments on Steve’s Presentations.” <https://www.stevegoreham.com/clients/>.

²¹⁸ Pomerantz, David. 2018. “Climate denier Jonathan Lesser attacks EVs for not being green enough.” *Energy and Policy Institute*, May 21, 2018. <https://energyandpolicy.org/lesser-climate-denier-attacks-electric-vehicles/>; Lesser, Jonathan A. “Summary of Experience.” *Continental Economics*.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24433352-jonathan-lesser-cv>; “TPPF Launches National Center for Energy Analytics.” *Texas Public Policy Foundation*, March 20, 2024.

<https://www.texaspolicy.com/press/tppf-launches-national-center-for-energy-analytics>;

²¹⁹ “Category Archives: Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions (AWED).” *MasterResource*.

<https://www.masterresource.org/category/alliance-for-wise-energy-decisions/>;

²²⁰ Droz, John. “AWED Energy and Environmental Newsletters - 2020 back through 2009.” *Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions*.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6943553-Alliance-for-Wise-Energy-Decision-Newsletters#document/p371>

²²¹ Droz. “John Droz, Jr. Casual CV.”

He pointed to ATI's 2011 lawsuit against Colorado's renewable energy standard as an example, and asked readers to donate money to support ATI.

ATI [named](#) coal producer Alpha Natural Resources as a member in a declaration by executive director Tom Tanton filed in the Colorado lawsuit in March of 2012.²²² Tanton said ATI's membership also included unnamed "electric power generating and transmission companies that generate energy from coal, natural gas and oil-fired and combustion turbine generation facilities."

One month earlier, in February of 2012, Droz [participated](#) in a coordinating meeting between anti-wind activists and representatives of ATI and other national groups backed by the fossil fuel money.²²³ He also [helped draft](#) an [anti-wind public relations strategy](#) in advance of the meeting.²²⁴

[Droz was back in D.C.](#) that December with Taylor and investor Larry Gerdes meeting with representatives of the American Legislative Exchange Council and Competitive Enterprise Institute and staff for multiple members of the U.S. House and Senate, according to an AWED report-back [document](#) EPI later found on one of Droz's anti-wind websites.²²⁵

"We gave each legislator a copy of the Rasmussen Renewable Energy report(2.0)," that document said.

Kimball Rasmussen is president and CEO of the Utah-based Deseret Power, a coal burning and mining electric cooperative. In 2010, Rasmussen credited Droz and Taylor with providing "thoughtful input" on the 2.0 edition of his report, "[A Rational Look at Renewable Energy](#)," which disparaged renewables while promoting methane gas as an alternative for reducing CO2 emissions.²²⁶

AWED's [D.C. trip report-back document](#) from 2012 also illustrates how Droz quickly got to work implementing parts of the national anti-wind PR strategy, which included plans to distribute copies of the Rasmussen report and coordinate with well-funded national groups like ALEC and the Heritage Foundation.²²⁷ Droz later continued to [coordinate his anti-wind efforts with Koch-backed groups](#) like Americans for Prosperity and FreedomWorks.²²⁸

"Everyone involved with AWED (including me) is an unpaid volunteer, who is committed to Science-based energy policies," Droz [told EPI](#) 2017.²²⁹

²²² Tanton. "Declaration of Thomas Tanton in support of plaintiff's response to defendant-intervenors' motion to dismiss."

²²³ "Energy Advocates Conference."

²²⁴ Anderson. "George David Banks: Trump's climate advisor worked with anti-wind and climate skeptic groups."; Elsner. "Confidential Documents Reveal Fossil Fuel-Funded Organizations Coordinating With Local Anti-Wind Groups."

²²⁵ Gerdes. "AWED December 2012 DC PTC Trip Report."

²²⁶ Rasmussen, Kimball. "A Rational Look at Renewable Energy and the Implications of Intermittent Power." issue, 2010. https://issuu.com/rational/docs/2992_rational_look_fin

²²⁷ Gerdes. Gerdes. "AWED December 2012 DC PTC Trip Report."

²²⁸ Eilpern, Juliet. "Unusual coalitions clash over wind energy tax credit." *Washington Post*, September 20, 2012.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/unusual-coalitions-clash-over-wind-energy-tax-credit/2012/09/20/fd775f1a-01c7-11e2-b257-e1c2b3548a4a_story.html.

²²⁹ Anderson. "George David Banks: Trump's climate advisor worked with anti-wind and climate skeptic groups."

Lisa Linowes

Lisa Linowes founded the Industrial Wind Action Group in 2006 and has since emerged as one of the nation's top anti-renewables activists. Her website, WindAction.org, describes her group as the “#1 Trusted Information Resource on Large-scale Renewables.”

WindAction is [incorporated](#) as a “Domestic Profit Corporation” in New Hampshire, where Linowes resides, though the group's incorporation information states it was “organized exclusively for charitable, educational & scientific purposes.”²³⁰

WindAction's website [claims](#) the group is “not funded in any way” by the fossil fuel industry or “affiliated with large political activists groups.”²³¹

Linowes is the [co-founder of the Save Right Whales Coalition](#) that's fighting offshore wind development along the east coast.²³² In 2021, she joined the [Caesar Rodney Institute's American Coalition for Ocean Protection](#).²³³

In addition, Linowes [serves on the board of directors](#) of Environmental Progress, a California-based group known for criticizing wind and solar power and advocating for nuclear energy and fossil fuels.²³⁴ Michael Shellenberger, the group's president, is [involved in the Save Right Whales Coalition](#) with Linowes.²³⁵

Linowes is also the [co-chairman](#) of the Wildlife, Energy & Community Coalition, which [opposes](#) “harmful industrial-scale renewables.”²³⁶

Linowes has long coordinated her efforts with think tanks funded by the fossil fuel industry. The Institute for Energy Research has [promoted Linowes' writings and efforts on its blog MasterResource.org since 2010](#), and in 2018 she joined IER's newly formed advisory council.²³⁷

²³⁰ Business information for Industrial Wind Action Group. New Hampshire Department of State.

<https://quickstart.sos.nh.gov/online/BusinessInquire/BusinessInformation?businessID=jsNPKgcULG8%3D>

²³¹ “About WindAction.” *Industrial Wind Action Group*. <https://www.windaction.org/about>

²³² Kummer, Frank. “How pro-fossil fuel groups helped sway the public against offshore wind in New Jersey.” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 1, 2023.

<https://www.inquirer.com/business/energy/orsted-offshore-wind-new-jersey-whales-20231101.html>.

²³³ “Caesar Rodney Institute: State Policy Network attacks on offshore wind power.” *Energy and Policy Institute*.

²³⁴ “Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Taxes.” *Environmental Progress*, 2022.

<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/812714086/202323119349304142/IRS99>.

²³⁵ Berger, Ilana. “Fox News is touting a dubious new documentary repeating misleading claims about offshore wind link to whale deaths.” *Media Matters*, August 29, 2023.

<https://www.mediamatters.org/fox-news/fox-news-touting-dubious-new-documentary-repeating-misleading-claims-about-offshore-wind>.

²³⁶ “Lisa Linowes.” LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lisa-linowes-58a45a56/>; “About Us.” Wildlife, Energy & Community Coalition. <https://web.archive.org/web/20240421085056/https://www.wecprotect.org/about-us>.

²³⁷ “Search Results for: ‘linowes.’” MasterResource.

https://www.masterresource.org/?s=linowes&orderby=post_date&order=DESC; Kovaleski, Dave. 2019. “Institute for Energy Research appoints new council.” *DailyEnergyInsider*, January 2, 2019.

<https://dailyenergyinsider.com/news/16805-institute-for-energy-research-appoints-new-council/>.

In 2017, the name of IER's former director of communications was listed as the "author" in the document properties of an open letter opposing the federal production tax credit for wind power that [Linowes claimed she wrote](#) alone.²³⁸

She's also [served as a senior policy fellow for the Texas Public Policy Foundation](#), where she authored a two-part anti-wind report in 2018.²³⁹

Kevon Martis

Kevon Martis is a longtime anti-renewables activist in Michigan who has organized and led multiple groups opposing renewable energy projects. Martis has served as a leader of [Our Home, Our Voice](#) (OHOV) since its inception in 2023, when the self-described 501(c)(4) organization opposed the passage of legislation aimed at streamlining renewable energy siting in Michigan.²⁴⁰ OHOV reported over \$145,000 in revenue on its [annual tax report for 2023](#), but was not required to disclose its donors.²⁴¹

Martis is now the spokesperson for a [Citizens for Local Choice](#) ballot initiative that's fighting to repeal Michigan's new siting law. Matt Brewer, an attorney for a group that's opposing the ballot initiative, told [Planet Detroit](#) earlier this year that OHOV's contributions to Citizens for Local Choice may have violated campaign finance laws by hiding the source of some early donations to the ballot committee.²⁴² Brewer then [filed a campaign finance complaint](#) against OHOV.²⁴³

Citizens for Local Choice did publicly report a [\\$10,000 contribution](#) from longtime [Ariel Corporation](#) executive Tom Rastin of Ohio.²⁴⁴

Martis [joined](#) the [Energy & Environment Legal Institute](#) (formerly known as the American Tradition Institute) as a Senior Policy Fellow in 2016, about a month after the [Wall Street Journal](#) reported that Arch Coal had to disclose its funding of the anti-renewables and anti-climate science group in its bankruptcy filings.²⁴⁵ In 2012, Martis participated in a coordinating meeting in D.C. between anti-wind activists from multiple states and representatives of the American Tradition Institute and other front groups backed by the fossil fuel industry.²⁴⁶

²³⁸ Anderson. "Who's behind a letter asking Congress to end the wind production tax credit?"

²³⁹ Anderson. "Attacks on wind and solar power by the coal and gas industries."

²⁴⁰ Anderson, Dave. "Political consultant for pipeline company teams up with anti-wind and solar activists in Michigan." *Energy and Policy Institute*, November 8, 2023. <https://energyandpolicy.org/anti-wind-and-solar-michigan/>.

²⁴¹ "Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax." *Our Home Our Voice*, 2023. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/922484513/202401349349201735/full>

²⁴² Allnutt, Brian. "Who's behind a ballot initiative to repeal Michigan's renewable energy siting laws?" *Planet Detroit*, February 8, 2024.

<https://planetdetroit.org/2024/02/whos-behind-a-ballot-initiative-to-repeal-michigans-renewable-energy-siting-law/>; Allnutt. "Hiding donors': Attorney says Michigan anti-renewable ballot effort may have broken campaign finance law."

²⁴³ Allnutt, Brian. "Campaign finance complaint filed against Michigan anti-renewable dark money group." *Planet Detroit*, April 11, 2024. <https://planetdetroit.org/2024/04/campaign-finance-complaint-our-home-our-voice/>

²⁴⁴ Allnutt. "Hiding donors': Attorney says Michigan anti-renewable ballot effort may have broken campaign finance law."

²⁴⁵ Richardson. "Release: Kevon Martis Joins E&E Legal as Senior Policy Fellow."; Fitzgerald, "Arch Coal Made \$10,000 Gift to Energy & Environment Legal."

²⁴⁶ "Energy Advocates Conference."

Martis has also led the Interstate Informed Citizens Coalition (IICC) since 2011.²⁴⁷

“Martis’s co-founder at the IICC, Joshua Nolan, represented Martin County Coal Corporation in a lawsuit that same year,” as [Distilled first reported](#).²⁴⁸

The [Institute for Energy Research](#) has promoted Martis’s writings and efforts [on its blog MasterResource since 2012](#).²⁴⁹

“I have not and do not receive any support from any energy interest of any kind,” Martis said in a 2020 [MasterResource blog post](#) by IER’s Robert Bradley. “This includes fossil fuel utilities or the Koch family, etc.”²⁵⁰

Martis also described his fellowship position at E&E Legal as unfunded and said “I take no direction from them on any matter.”

Martis’s anti-renewables efforts have extended far beyond his own backyard in Michigan.

“And I have testified on wind energy land use issues across the Midwest, including OH, IL, MI and Kentucky as well as in Nebraska and North Dakota,” Martis said during his [2016 testimony](#) to the Ohio Power Siting Board on wind siting rules.²⁵¹

“I have also been invited to testify before members of Congress in Washington DC,” Martis also said, in reference to a 2013 [event hosted by IER](#).

Martis also [appeared](#) at [anti-wind meetings](#) in Ohio with Samuel Randazzo, the former attorney and lobbyist who was secretly paid millions of dollars by the coal-burning utility FirstEnergy between 2010 and 2019.²⁵²

Tom Stacy

Tom Stacy has served as a director for the National Wind Watch (NWW), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Massachusetts that serves as a clearinghouse for anti-wind information, since 2009.²⁵³

²⁴⁷ “Kevon Martis.” LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kevon-martis-88345054/>

²⁴⁸ Thomas, Michael, and Emily Atkin. “Meet the Man Fueling Clean Energy Opposition in the Midwest.” *Distilled*, February 9, 2023. <https://www.distilled.earth/p/meet-the-man-fueling-clean-energy>.

²⁴⁹ “Search Results for: ‘kevon martis.’” *MasterResource*.

https://www.masterresource.org/?s=kevon%20martis&orderby=post_date&order=DESC

²⁵⁰ Bradley, Robert. “Kevon Martis: Common-good Foe of Industrial Solar and Wind.” *MasterResource*, July 27, 2020. <https://www.masterresource.org/martis-kevon/smear-martis-solar-michigan/>.

²⁵¹ Bradley, Robert. “Wind Siting Rules: Kevon Martis Testimony to the Ohio Power Siting Board.” *MasterResource*, June 9, 2016. <https://www.masterresource.org/wind-siting-issues/wind-siting-ohio-martis/>.

²⁵² Anderson. “Samuel Randazzo: PUCO candidate is an opponent of renewable energy.”; Day, Courtney. “Greenwich residents request wind farm rehearing.” *Times-Gazette*, September 24, 2014.

<https://www.times-gazette.com/story/news/2014/09/24/greenwich-residents-request-wind-farm/19071480007/>.

²⁵³ Reviewed copies of National Wind Watch’s annual reports to the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for 2005-2023 available at:

<https://corp.sec.state.ma.us/CorpWeb/CorpSearch/CorpSearchFormList.aspx?sysvalue=udpRRwFe838Z76AxHjag4w->

NWW is [frequently asked](#) if it is “backed by the coal or nuclear industry.”²⁵⁴

“NWW is not backed by, affiliated with, or funded in any way by these or any other industry, political organization, or ‘think tank,’” according to a FAQ [page](#) found on the group’s website [wind-watch.org](#).

The FAQ page also states that members of the organization’s board of directors “are unpaid volunteers with no affiliations to fossil fuel or nuclear energy industries or any similar outside interests.”

Stacy began to fight wind power as the leader of Save Western Ohio from 2008 to 2010, and he also co-founded the Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions with John Droz.²⁵⁵

For many years, Stacy could be found speaking at events and hearings alongside other prominent wind power opponents like [Lisa Linowes](#), [Kevon Martis](#), and [Samuel Randazzo](#).²⁵⁶

By 2014, Stacy became a paid consultant for groups like the [Institute for Energy Research](#) and the coal industry group [America’s Power](#).²⁵⁷ He’s co-authored [multiple reports](#) that [mislead](#) on the costs of renewable energy with George Taylor, a consultant and fellow for the [Energy and Environment Legal Institute](#).²⁵⁸

In 2022, Stacy [co-authored a report by the Center of the American Experiment](#), a State Policy Network group in Minnesota, that opposed Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers’s 100% clean energy plan.²⁵⁹ The Center received [\\$250,000 that year](#) from the Koch group Americans for Prosperity.

²⁵⁴ “FAQ — About National Wind Watch.” *National Wind Watch*. <https://wind-watch.org/faq-aboutus.php>.

²⁵⁵ Anderson. “Tom Stacy: A top anti-wind activist who got paid by a fossil fuel funded group.”

²⁵⁶ Bradley, Robert. “Speaking Truth to Wind Power (Recent IER Panel on the Hill).” *MasterResource*, January 7, 2014. <https://www.masterresource.org/general-problems/speaking-truth-to-wind-power-ier/>; Frownfelder, David. “Wind seminar planned.” *Daily Telegram*, January 12, 2011.

<https://www.lenconnect.com/story/news/local/2011/01/13/wind-seminar-planned/64108609007/>; Day. “Greenwich residents request wind farm rehearing.”

²⁵⁷ Anderson. “Tom Stacy: A top anti-wind activist who got paid by a fossil fuel funded group.”; Kowalski, Kathiann. “Coal industry group revives reliability argument to Ohio lawmakers.” *Energy News Network*, February 5, 2020.

<https://energynews.us/2020/02/05/coal-industry-group-revives-reliability-argument-to-ohio-lawmakers/>.

²⁵⁸ Goggin, Michael. “Koch groups try debunked wind attack for a fourth time.” *American Wind Energy Association*, July 1, 2015.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20150703032646/http://www.aweablog.org/koch-groups-try-debunked-wind-attack-for-a-fourth-time/#>; McCullough, Robert F., Jr. “Is Existing Coal Actually Cost Effective in the Presence of Falling Renewable Prices?.” *McCullough Research*, August 19, 2019. <https://www.mresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/20190819-IER-Rebuttal.pdf>.

²⁵⁹ Orr, Isaac, and Mitch Rolling. “The High Cost of 100 Percent Carbon Free Electricity by 2050.” *Center of the American Experiment*, October 2022. <https://files.americanexperiment.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/The-High-Cost-of-100-Percent-Carbon-Free-Electricity.pdf>.

Tom Tanton

Tom Tanton has been the president of the consulting firm T2 & Associates since 2003, and during that time he has churned out reports for groups like the [American Petroleum Institute](#) and [American Legislative Exchange Council](#).²⁶⁰

Tanton was a vice president at the Institute for Energy Research from 2003 to 2007, where he was [part of the fight to kill the Cape Wind offshore wind project](#).²⁶¹ He's been affiliated with the [American Tradition Institute and Energy and Environment Legal Institute](#) for over a decade.

Tanton's LinkedIn account [lists "friend" of Save Western Ohio](#) as his professional experience for 2009.²⁶² Save Western Ohio was the anti-wind group led by [Tom Stacy](#) before Stacy became a paid consultant who co-authored reports for IER and the coal industry.

A slew of influential anti-renewables activists who emerged during the 2000s have cited Tanton as an early influence on their views on wind power.

A [page](#) from the website We Oppose Wind Farms last updated in 2009 includes a picture of Tanton posing with "statewide wind warriors" from New York.²⁶³ More recently, the anti-wind group Save Ontario Shores [used public intervenor funds to pay Tanton](#) to be an expert witness against the Lighthouse Wind project in upstate New York, which was never built.²⁶⁴

"Much of my tutorial about wind energy and grid operations came from Tom Tanton's knowledgeable bonhomie," birder and anti-wind activist Jon Boone wrote in a [2006 paper](#).²⁶⁵ "His patient mentoring, enkindled through long phone conversations and voluminous exchanges of emails, made this work possible."

Boone created the website [stopillwind.com](#) and produced and directed "Life Under a Windplant," a documentary often cited by anti-wind activists.²⁶⁶ Some of [Boone's writings](#) from more than a decade ago can still be found on IER's blog [MasterResource.org](#).²⁶⁷

²⁶⁰ Elsner, Gabe. "House Subcommittee on Energy and Power Features Fossil Fuel Front Groups." *Energy and Policy Institute*, July 14, 2024.

<https://energyandpolicy.org/house-subcommittee-on-energy-and-power-features-fossil-fuel-front-groups/>; "New England Ratepayers Association." *Energy and Policy Institute*. <https://energyandpolicy.org/new-england-ratepayers-association/>.

²⁶¹ Roberts, David. "Already the Kennedy wind controversy is a target of fatuous bloviating." *Grist*, January 19, 2006.

<https://grist.org/article/kennedy-wind-and-fatuity/>.

²⁶² Anderson. "Tom Stacy: A top anti-wind activist who got paid by a fossil fuel funded group."

²⁶³ We Oppose Wind Farms. "Our Own Photo Gallery."

²⁶⁴ Barth, Roger V. "Save Ontario Shores Intervenor Fund Award - Quarterly Report 1/1/16-3/31/16." *Law Offices of Roger V. Barth*. Filed with the State of New York Department of Public Service in case 14-F-0485 on August 22, 2016.

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24522894-save-ontario-shores-anti-wind-group-paid-tom-tanton-with-public-intervenor-funds>.

²⁶⁵ Jon, Boone. 2006. "Less for More: The Rube Goldberg Nature of Industrial Wind Development."

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/24500955-less-for-more-the-rube-goldberg-nature-of-industrial-wind-development-by-jon-boone-2006>.

²⁶⁶ Boone, Jon. n.d. "Stopillwind.org - An educational resource about industrial wind." *stopillwind*.

<http://stopillwind.com/index.php>.

²⁶⁷ Boone, Jon. "Industrial Wind Plants: Bad Economics, Bad Ecology." *MasterResource*, October 24, 2009.

<https://www.masterresource.org/wind-power/industrial-wind-plants-bad-economics-bad-ecology/>.

Tanton [topped a 2008 list](#) where anti-winder John Droz dubbed “the better writers regarding the industrial wind power business.”²⁶⁸

That same year, Boone [credited](#) Tanton, Droz, Lisa Linowes, and others with reviewing a draft of his article “Why Wind Won’t Work.”²⁶⁹

In 2010, anti-winder Ken Hawkins [credited](#) Tanton, Boone, Droz, and Stacy, as well as IER’s CEO Robert Bradley, with reviewing a draft of his paper on renewable energy grid integration.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ Droz, John. “Wind Power Information Sources.” *National Wind Watch*, January 16, 2008.

<https://www.wind-watch.org/alerts/wp-content/uploads/2008/01/droz-windpowerreferences2.pdf>.

²⁶⁹ Boone, Jon. “Why Wind Won’t Work.” *National Wind Watch*, April 26, 2008.

<https://docs.wind-watch.org/boonej-whywindwontwork-2008.pdf>.

²⁷⁰ Hawkins, Kent. “Integrating Renewables: Have Policymakers Faced the Realities?” *National Wind Watch*, March 14, 2010. <https://www.wind-watch.org/documents/integrating-renewables-have-policymakers-faced-the-realities/>.



The Energy and Policy Institute is a watchdog organization working to expose attacks on renewable energy and counter misinformation by fossil fuel and utility interests.