



Younger, P. L. (2015) Early end of wind subsidies. Scotsman, p. 36.

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Deposited on: 19 June 2015

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Early end of wind subsidies

Dear Editor

Scottish Renewables are right to describe the Westminster government's decision to bring forward the ending of subsidies for onshore wind developments as "neither fair nor reasonable". One aspect of this unfairness is a glaring example of environmental injustice. As I explain in more detail in my recent book "*Energy: all that matters*" (Hodder, 2014), onshore wind would already be competitive with fossil-fuel power generation were the two contending on a level playing field, which would only be the case if fossil fuel generation was obliged to fully internalise the costs of its carbon emissions. This could be done by obliging retrofit of carbon capture and storage, or, where this could not be achieved for technical reasons, paying the equivalent sum into a renewables development fund. In a fair and reasonable market, onshore wind would undoubtedly have a major contribution to make to decarbonising electricity.

The decision is also unreasonable as it undermines the traditional image of the Westminster government as being trustworthy in honouring its prior commitments. This move will not only damage investor confidence in renewables (as the Tory government clearly hopes), but also in nuclear and other sectors that require sustained government support to compete against unabated fossil fuels.

As for Amber Rudd's glib suggestion that solar can do just as well as wind: she has clearly not been in Scotland for much of this Spring ...

Yours sincerely

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