

CNN Headline News: Q2 Wind Industry Report

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Well, wind farms are sprouting up at a robust pace across the country creating clean energy, much-needed jobs. Well, now the industry is calling for strong government action to keep the wind from dying down. Cnnmoney.com's Alison Kosik has more from New York from us. First a little bit of background. Enough new generating capacity was installed last quarter to power about 350,000 homes. That's according to the American Wind Energy Association. The trade group says Missouri was by far the fastest growing state for wind. Missouri governor Jay Nixon has been a vocal proponent of using wind energy to create jobs in his state. Pennsylvania came in a distant second followed by South Dakota, Washington, and Texas. Christi? You mentioned governor Nixon wanted to use wind energy to create jobs. Is it working? How many jobs have been created from this sector? You know, Christi, so far it is working. The AWEA says about 85,000 people work in the wind industry today, and that's a 70% increase from last year, but there's concern many of those jobs could disappear. The recession has caused demand for electricity to fall, so utilities are less eager to purchase the electricity generated by wind farms. That make it is harder for wind farms to get the funds needed to build more wind turbines. In addition to those financial issues, there are aesthetic concerns from people who don't want to see those huge wind farms sprouting up in their backyards. You know, that NIMBY syndrome. What about securing funds from the government? Is any federal stimulus money going to fund wind energy? You know, you make a good point. It sounds like just the type of project the stimulus was designed for. To date, no money has gone to wind energy companies but that is about to change. Today the government announced it's distributing \$3 billion of stimulus money to renewable energy companies, including wind energy companies. The AWEA says some wind projects are moving ahead with construction under the assumption that they'll soon be able to apply for more and receive government money. In addition to funding, the AWEA wants Congress to adopt a renewable electricity standard which would force a switch to wind and other sources of renewable energy. Many countries in Europe and Asia already have these standards. Renewable electricity standard here could potentially stop thousands of new green jobs from going overseas or disappearing altogether. Even better, it could create more jobs right here in the U.S. Christi? All right, Alison, good to see you. Thank you so much.