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## Energy and subsidies

As referenced in The Courier March 2 story titled "Director: Renewables key to economic growth," the economic director's job is to create development. However, when it comes to money, sometimes things get missed.

Look at a new car or a house. What is the single best motivation that a salesperson may say? "I'll sell you this car right now for \$5,000 less if you buy it today" or "there are several other buyers looking at this property, you may want to make an offer." The folks at the development office are hearing this right now about the company proposing the "\$1 billion data center."

However, this company has asked for renewable energy in Hancock County. Electricity, like gas, is a "commodity," it is bought and sold and ranges in value; and it just so happens that renewable energy is thought of

## NEWS

like its organic food, so it tends to cost more. Unfortunately because of lucrative subsidies, renewables look cheap, and despite inherent inefficiencies with renewable energy, renewables claim to compete with other forms of electric production. However subsidies only last so long, and anytime something is "subsidized" there is someone else who picks up the extra cost.

In our area, the PJM grid is the "toll-road" that supplies electricity. This "electric" toll-road extends through several states and has "entrance and exit ramps" on it. The "entrances" are where power is "distributed" — any producer can tap into the grid as long as they pay the "tolls" to anywhere that has "exits" built.

Electricity can be produced by coal, gas, nuclear, wind, solar, etc., as long as there is an "entrance" on the grid, then that electricity is "for sale." So do not give in to the game that this company is playing. They can have renewable energy from anywhere as long as the renewable energy is on the PJM grid. If Hancock County wants a countywide exclusion zone, so be it.

Access to renewable energy should not be the dealbreaker. If it is, then this company or any others down the road are simply looking for a handout.

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