

Delahunt fears wind farm effect on radar

'Profound' security concerns spur call for federal hearing

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U.S. Rep. William Delahunt, the Cape's congressman, is urging a federal hearing on

whether a proposed Nantucket Sound wind farm will interfere with military and civilian radar systems.

Delahunt, appearing yesterday before the House Com-

mittee on Homeland Security, said an oversight hearing must be held "as soon as possible" to address what he calls a matter of national security.

Citing reported concerns about the impact of British wind farms on maritime radar, Delahunt had asked the U.S. Department of Defense to look into the U.K. findings. Earlier this week, he was briefed by

defense officials.

"Without divulging sensitive defense information, it will suffice to say that yesterday's (Department of Defense) report was cause for profound concern," Delahunt wrote to U.S. Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., chairman of the Homeland Security committee. "There is

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Defense worries

■ U.S. Rep. William Delahunt says he is specifically concerned about Cape Wind's potential to disrupt PAVE PAWS' ability to scan the skies for ballistic missiles, despite an Air Force official's 2004 finding that the wind farm "poses no threat to the operation of the PAVE PAWS radar."



Wind farm: Delahunt fears radar interference

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ample evidence to suggest wind turbines cause some degree of interference with nearby radar installations."

Delahunt expressed concern that the 130 proposed turbines would affect the PAVE PAWS radar station in Sagamore, which is the eastern pillar of the U.S. Air Force's ballistic missile tracking system.

Young plan on the table

His request for a federal hearing arrived as a congressional conference committee mulls a proposal by U.S. Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, that would ban wind turbines within 1½ miles of shipping and ferry lanes. If adopted, Young's plan would likely kill the Nantucket Sound wind farm. Young, the House's third-ranking Republican, likewise cited the British experience in his navigational concerns about offshore wind projects.

A Cape Wind spokesman called Delahunt's bid for a radar study "desperate" and "suspect," saying the Federal Aviation Administration and U.S. Air Force have already weighed in on the subject of radar safety.

"The FAA has already looked at all these issues and has twice issued a determination of no hazard," said Mark Rodgers, Cape Wind spokesman. "I think Congressman Delahunt is trying to look for a different outcome."

In 2004, FAA officials reported there would be "no hazard" to aviation posed by the Nantucket Sound project. Also, U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Douglas Fraser wrote in a 2004 memo that the Nantucket Sound project "poses no threat to the operation of the PAVE PAWS radar."

Opponents suspicious

Cliff Carroll, a wind farm opponent and co-founder of wind-stop.org, said the emerging issue of radar problems in Europe has

been "swept under the carpet" throughout regulators' review of the Cape Wind project.

"I can't believe we waited four years and (went through) a 4,000-page environmental impact report and they never mentioned radar interference," Carroll said yesterday.

In seeking a hearing on radar safety, Delahunt said the federal agencies charged with reviewing the wind farm proposal – including lead agent the Department of Interior – don't have the technical capability or money to fully investigate the issue.

Likewise, he wrote, "it is not clear that our military and homeland defense agencies are adequately resourced to tackle this issue with the vigor and comprehensiveness it deserves."

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