

Yesterday, Jonathan Zasloff wrote a [post](#) on [Senator Alexander and Representative Mike Pompeo's Wall Street Journal op-ed](#) opposing the wind energy tax credit, which is set to expire at the end of 2012 barring Congressional action. Yesterday's post raised the question of how traditional fossil fuel subsidies compare to renewable energy subsidies.



A 2009 report shows that fossil fuel subsidies dwarf renewable energy subsidies.

A [2009 Environmental Law Institute report](#) sheds some light on the “hidden” ways we subsidize traditional energy sources. The study reveals that tax breaks and direct government spending on fossil fuels totaled **\$72 billion** over the six-year study period, dwarfing the **\$29 billion** of subsidies to renewables over the same period. What’s more, over half of federal subsidies for renewables were directed at corn ethanol.

Meanwhile, the American Wind Energy Association released a [statement](#) yesterday about recent waves of layoffs in the wind manufacturing sector, including almost half of Siemens Wind Power’s U.S. workforce, a quarter of Molded Fiber Glass’ workforce, and nearly 300 Katana Summit workers:

“Uncertainty about the future of tax credits for wind power is forcing the closures,” Katana CEO Kevin Strudthoff told the Associated Press. He said orders for the towers Katana Summit makes have nearly stopped for 2013 because wind power developers want to know whether the tax credits that expire at the end of this year will be renewed.

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney and vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan have [declared their opposition to extending the wind energy tax credit](#). Ryan has stated, “We think these tax credits are important to get industries up and running, but we don’t think they should continue on indefinitely.” President Obama [supports extending the tax credit](#) and has previously [called for a reduction in fossil fuel subsidies](#).