

Green job boasts fail to deliver

FIRST POSTED: TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2015 07:55 PM EDT | UPDATED: TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2015 10:51 PM EDT



Wind turbines are seen in the distance beyond hills near Banning, California in this file photo from August 8, 2013. (REUTERS/David McNew)

Politicians like Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and California Gov. Jerry Brown boast that their public investments in green energy are creating new jobs.

Problem is those claims are largely nonsense.

In 2009, the Ontario Liberals, then led by Dalton McGuinty, introduced the Green Energy Act, boasting it would create more than 50,000 new jobs, 40,000 directly related to renewable energy, within three years.

In December, 2011, then auditor general Jim McCarter found 30,000 of the promised 50,000-plus jobs were expected to be in construction, lasting no more than three years.

McCarter also warned: “(S)tudies in other jurisdictions have shown that for each job created through renewable energy programs, about two to four jobs are often lost in other sectors of the economy because of higher electricity prices.”

A similar green job creation scheme has now gone bust in California.

As The Associated Press reported Monday: “Three years after California voters passed a ballot measure to raise taxes on corporations and generate clean energy jobs by funding energy-efficiency projects in schools, barely one-tenth of the promised jobs have been created, and the state has no comprehensive list to show how much work has been done or how much energy has been saved.”

California’s 2012 Clean Energy Jobs Act closed a tax loophole for multi-state corporations, with half the proceeds earmarked for green energy projects in the state’s school system, supposedly to create more than 11,000 new jobs each year.

But three years in, only 1,700 jobs have been created in total and more than half of the \$297 million the new tax generated (\$153 million) has gone to consultants and energy auditors, not to actual projects.

The oversight board created to monitor and report on the program has never met.

The Los Angeles school board was projected to save \$27 million a year annually on energy costs. So far it’s proposed projects to save \$1.4 million.

Under Wynne, Ontario is about to enter into a cap-and-trade carbon pricing scheme with California and Quebec, increasing the costs of most goods and services to consumers, which officials say could bring up to \$2 billion annually more into provincial coffers when fully operational.

What could possibly go wrong?