

# Testimony of Luann Therrien Sheffield, Vermont

*Presented to Vermont's Senate Health & Welfare Committee*

*On January 20, 2016*

## Seager



4 1/2 years old

April 2014,

Living next to  
First Wind's Sheffield  
Wind turbines

## Baily



2 years old

January 17, 2015

Less than one month  
after moving far from  
First Wind's Sheffield  
Wind turbines



5 years old,



3 years old,



Fall 2015

School Photos



Good Morning Committee Members,

My name is Luann Therrien, currently of Derby, Vermont.

A few things have changed since the last time I spoke before you in April of 2014. On December 22, 2014 our family abandoned our home of 18 years in Sheffield. Was not a choice to move, it was a matter of survival.

The children started sleeping through the night within a month of moving. Previously Baily at three years old had slept through the night only once. Seager had dark circles under his eyes. They started sleeping well after leaving Sheffield.

As you can see from the photos of my children on the cover page, we are physically on the road to recovery. Cannot say the same of our mental state.

Seager is in school and has behavioral issues that are being evaluated and may or may not be a result of living next to the Sheffield wind turbines for the first three years of life. Exposing him to three years of what the UN and others acknowledge is a form of torture – sleep deprivation – may have long-term health effects. We do not know. We do know there are children living around Lowell who do not want to play outside, and we know there are a lot of children living in Rocky Ridge in Swanton who are at risk.

Steve and I have sought the help of a psychiatric nurse practitioner and have been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. What this means in real life is when I go into a store.... or when the furnace kicked on when I wasn't expecting it... it takes me right back there.... Shirley Nelson says it happens to her, too

The following is a letter written by our psychiatric nurse practitioner

January 18, 2016

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Steve and LuAnn Therrien. I am a psychiatric nurse practitioner in Newport, VT and have been seeing them individually since April 2015. It is my belief that Steve and LuAnn suffer from a form of a form of trauma-induced and stressor-related disorder which can be compared to Post-traumatic Stress Disorder in that a specific trigger or stressor, in this case the wind turbines situated near their former home, has caused them lasting negative impacts in the form of disturbed sleep and subsequent mental health issues.

In this case, the anxiety and depressed mood generated by the noise and/or sound waves from the turbines has continued past six months (one of the diagnostic criteria) despite their having had to leave their home. This has manifested in significant impairment in social, occupational, and other important areas of functioning. I also believe that having to make the decision to abandon their family home in order to regain some kind of normality for themselves and their children has manifested in prolonged depression and complex bereavement of a sort for the loss of their lifelong dream to live off the grid in a remote, and at one time pristine, area.

I did not know the Therriens prior to their coming to see me but I have heard the stories of a life that had to be abandoned out of desperation and fear for their and their children's well-being. Steve and Luann are very resilient people, but this episode in their life has changed them - and altered the ending to the story of living as a family in Vermont's mountains. Stress comes in many forms and in my profession I try and help people see what their current stressors are so that positive changes can be made to alleviate anxiety and depression. In this case, it was impossible for me to remove a wind turbine from their lives. I have much admiration for their bravery and strength in trying to bring some measure of peace and back to their lives - but this battle has taken its toll in the form of severe sleep deprivation, and radically-altered mood that has cost them much in the way of lost income, emotional upheaval, and a well-deserved right to live out their life as they originally chose it.

Please let me know if I can offer any other insights into the negative sequelae caused to this family by industrial wind turbine noise.

Sincerely,

S. Kathryn Mathieson, APRN, Ph.D.

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We are lucky enough to no longer reside in too close proximity of the Industrial Wind nightmare. Unfortunately there are many not as lucky who are still suffering.

We worry over any new Victims that may be created. Such as these children from Swanton who played with my children at the Swanton Wind Fair. You cannot allow them to suffer.

The Department of Health needs to stop passing the buck off to the Public Service Board, by going about the business they are meant to perform; protecting Vermont's Citizens.

This can be started by requiring all existing Industrial Wind Project owners conduct real time, full time sound monitoring.

And by Supporting Senator Rodgers bill to ban the construction of any new Industrial Wind Projects

You simply cannot allow areas such as Readsboro, Searsburg, Swanton, Fairfield, Irasburg, Windham, Grafton and surrounding areas who are all facing big wind turbines with developers actively promoting the intention to construct larger turbines closer to homes than caused our family to abandon our home.

Thank you for allowing me this time to give you my testimony.

Thank you,

Luann Therrien

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Seager and Baily Therrien with three of the children who live on Rocky Ridge Road in Swanton

