

When I was a kid, the holiday's were always my favorite time of the year.

What's not to love? I got to spend time with family. I was surrounded by wonderful food and treats. And the gifts... who could forget the presents?!

But there was always one aspect of the holidays that I dreaded — when they were over and you had to go back to school.

I wanted to stay at home, stuff my face with cookies, and play with other kids and all the cool new stuff we got.

But alas, January always follows December, no matter how sad of a proposition that is.

We try to pass the coming of a new year off as a time of renewal and growth. We half-heartedly commit to goals when we have no intention of following through. Truth be told, we'd all just rather be on holiday vacation playing with our presents — until they broke or we got tired of them.

Presents are a big deal when you're a kid. Well, the ones you like anyway.

There are always exceptions. As a child who is overflowing with anticipation, there's nothing more disappointing than tearing through a neatly wrapped present only to find something lame like winter socks or a label maker.

Still, your folks always taught you to smile and express gratitude, because...

"It's the thought that counts."

If that sounds trite, it's because

it is. It's one of those things we're taught as kids that just doesn't stick.

I can think of no better example than what happened to the wind energy industry last month in the halls of the U.S. Congress.

Despite the aggressive, empasioned advocacy campaign by the wind energy industry and the fact that Americans (contituents, voters, etc.) overwhelmingly side in favor of alternative and renewable energy policies, Congress voted passed a one-year extension of the production tax credit.

In reality, that amounted to roughly two weeks ... after taxes.

The wind industry's official stance was one of gratitude, while remaining firm to it's position that long-term support is crucial for the advancement of the industry.

It's a good thing I don't speak for the industry as a whole, because I'm pretty sure my toothy, fake smile couldn't cover the utter dejection that accompanied unwrapping an electric blanket.

I'm probably being too harsh. After all, Congress *did* allow us to re-create the holidays swof our youth — sort of.

They provided us two weeks at the end of the year to play with the lousiest gift we got.



Thanks for reading,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Sisk'.

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