

RENEWABLE ENERGY: THE TIME HAS COME

MAY 24, 2007

LETTER TO CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP



DEAR CONGRESS

As a diverse group of corporations, manufacturers, electric utilities, renewable energy developers, labor organizations, farm groups, faith-based organizations and environmental advocates, we are writing to urge the inclusion of a national renewable portfolio standard (RPS) in energy security legislation that may soon be considered by Congress. An RPS is an essential component of a broader national energy strategy, because it will help the nation to take full advantage of the abundant domestic renewable resources available for the generation of electricity.

An RPS is a market-based mechanism that requires electric utilities to include a specific percentage of clean, renewable energy in their generation portfolios, or to purchase renewable energy credits from others. By substantially increasing renewable electricity generation, the RPS would enhance national energy security by diversifying our sources of electric generation. At a time when the United States is increasing energy imports, an RPS would make America more energy self-reliant. The reduction in the use of fossil fuels to generate electricity would also limit fuel price volatility, which is important to both industry and consumers. In fact, the U.S. Department of Energy's own Energy Information Administration has found in several studies that an RPS would actually cause natural gas prices to decline.

Increasing the market share for renewable energy resources would also have substantial environmental benefits. An RPS is one of the most important and readily available approaches to reducing greenhouse gases from the electricity generation sector. In addition, an RPS also would help reduce conventional pollutants including nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide and mercury emissions.

Moreover, a national RPS will produce substantial economic benefits. The additional investment in renewable electric generation would create hundreds of thousands of well-paying jobs. In addition, because many renewable resources are located in remote areas, rural America will experience a substantial economic boost.

The costs of inaction for our environment, national security and economy are too high. Although more than 20 states have adopted individual RPS programs, the country will not realize the full potential for renewable electricity without the adoption of a Federal program to enhance the states' efforts.

WE CALL ON CONGRESS TO ENACT NATIONAL RPS LEGISLATION.

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