



## **Wind Industry Gears Up to Highlight Benefits of Stronger RES**

As Congressional action on energy legislation stretches toward summer and beyond, the wind industry is marshalling its forces and arguments for a renewed push to strengthen the renewable electricity standard (RES) included in drafts of House and Senate legislation.

The House bill, H.R. 2454, already approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee, includes a 20% renewable electricity standard, but governors would be permitted to allow up to 8% of the standard to be met through energy efficiency measures. The Senate bill, still being drafted by the Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee, includes a 15% RES by 2021, with 4% potentially supplied by energy efficiency. A markup is currently scheduled in the Senate ENR Committee for June 4. AWEA has been seeking an RES of 25% by 2025.

In early June AWEA and a dozen member companies will join a new business coalition calling for a stronger RES. The coalition, to be called the RES Alliance for Jobs, will stress that a stronger RES is needed if the renewables industry is to invest billions of dollars to expand production and create jobs.

In addition to monitoring continued drafting in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, AWEA members are seeking a series of meetings with leaders on Capitol Hill to stress the economic benefits of a stronger RES. Work on the energy and climate change legislation is expected to continue through the summer and into the fall, giving renewable advocates ample time to affect the final outcome.

AWEA is also targeting economic policymakers in the Obama Administration to stress that a stronger RES, in addition to creating jobs in the wind industry, will make it easier to meet the greenhouse gas emissions reductions proposed by the Administration and in the aforementioned House legislation.

Based on the models included in the Department of Energy 20% wind report, a stronger RES could produce enough electricity to meet more than 40% of the emissions reductions needed from the electric sector to achieve the targets set in the House legislation, and would use existing, non-pollution technology to accomplish this. Because wind and other renewables are ready now, deploying them could begin the emission reductions immediately.

A stronger RES would also decrease the cost of complying with the House bill; wind's ability to reduce emissions and cost has been noted in recent reports from the U.S. Department of Energy, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, and PJM Interconnection, LLC (see related story below).

*Source: Wind Energy Weekly, 29 May 2009*