

SUN DAY CAMPAIGN

6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite #340
Takoma Park, MD 20912
301-270-NIRS, ext.23
sun-day-campaign@hotmail.com

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY STUDY #16

Southeast States Would Benefit from National Renewable Electricity Standard, New Analysis Finds National Standard Would Generate Jobs, Reduce Electric Bills, and Cut Global Warming Pollution:

Union of Concerned Scientists, August 2, 2007

http://www.ucsusa.org/news/press_release/southeast-would-benefit-res-0052.html

On the eve of a House energy bill vote, a new analysis by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) shows that the Southeastern United States – a region often characterized as a potential net loser in a renewable energy economy – would reap significant economic benefits from a federal requirement that utilities generate at least 20 percent of their power from clean, renewable energy sources by 2020. Reps. Tom Udall (D-NM), Todd Platts (R-PA.), and Ciro Rodriguez (D-TX) introduced an amendment yesterday that sets a 15 percent requirement by 2020, which would still offer substantial economic benefits to the region.

A national renewable electricity standard (RES) would help the Southeast reduce energy costs for homeowners, small businesses, and larger industrial facilities, and boost new investment in renewable energy technologies, according to UCS. With lower electricity and natural gas prices, Southeast residents would save \$750 million cumulatively by 2020, with savings continuing to increase to more than \$4.5 billion by 2030.

A national 20 percent by 2020 RES also would bolster the region's economy by encouraging the development of the Southeast's local energy sources and reducing the amount of money spent on importing coal and nuclear fuel from other parts of the nation and world. In 2005 alone, the region spent \$7.3 billion on coal imports, more than a third from Wyoming. A renewable standard could keep money in the local economy. For example, UCS calculations show that Southeast landowners who produce bioenergy such as switchgrass or forestry residues would stand to gain \$2.7 billion per year by 2020, with cumulative revenues of nearly \$9.5 billion.

"Contrary to popular belief, we found that the Southeast would stand to gain big-time from a national electricity standard," said Marchant Wentworth, Washington representative for UCS's Clean Energy Program. "Who could argue with a program that would mean lower electric bills, more local jobs, and less pollution?"

With an already strong manufacturing base for producing renewable energy equipment, a 20-percent-by-2020 national RES would generate more than \$5 billion in new capital investment for bioenergy, wind, and solar energy projects, according to the UCS analysis.

Recent UCS analyses such as this one show that the entire nation would benefit from an RES. Nationally, the organization found that a 20-by-2020 standard would generate more than 185,000 renewable energy jobs over the next 13 years in manufacturing, construction and other industries. In addition, farmers, ranchers, and rural landowners who produce biomass energy or lease their land to wind developers would earn \$25.6 billion over that time. Consumers, meanwhile, would save \$10.5 billion on energy bills through 2020 (growing to \$31.8 billion by 2030) due to a reduced demand for fossil fuels and lower natural gas and electricity prices. Finally a national RES also would slash global warming pollution by 223 million metric tons a year, the equivalent of taking 36.4 million cars off the road.

To download the PDF of the report, go to: http://www.ucsusa.org/news/press_release/southeast-would-benefit-res-0052.html .

#####

Cashing In on Clean Energy - A National Renewable Electricity Standard Will Benefit the Economy and the Environment - 2007 Analysis:

America's current energy system is dominated by fossil fuels, which pose serious threats to our health and environment and leave us vulnerable to price spikes and supply shortages. With the threat of global warming becoming increasingly urgent, we must make responsible energy choices today that ensure a safe, reliable power supply and a healthy environment for future generations.

Fortunately, there are practical and affordable ways to achieve this goal. Homegrown renewable energy resources—such as wind, solar, bioenergy, and geothermal—can help reduce our dependence on polluting fossil fuels. These clean energy sources can also help stabilize energy prices, stimulate the development of innovative new technology, and create high-quality jobs and other economic benefits.

Strong national policies can ensure these benefits are fully realized. The policy that has proven most effective and popular at the state level is the renewable electricity standard (also known as the renewable portfolio standard or RPS), which requires electricity providers to supply a minimum percentage of their power from clean energy sources. As of June 2007, renewable electricity standards have been adopted in 23 states and Washington, DC. At the national level, the U.S. Senate has passed a 10 percent by 2020 national renewable electricity standard three times since 2002—most recently in June 2005—only to be rejected by the House conferees each time.

Momentum continues to grow for a strong national standard. A 20 percent by 2020 standard was introduced in the House in February 2007, and a 15 percent by 2020 standard is under consideration in the Senate. Using a model from the Energy Information Administration (EIA), the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) examined the long-term effects that a national 20 percent by 2020 standard would have on the economy and the environment.

20 Percent by 2020: The Benefits of a National Renewable Electricity Standard

Job Creation

185,000 new jobs from renewable energy development

Economic Development

\$66.7 billion in new capital investment, \$25.6 billion in income to farmers, ranchers, and rural landowners, and \$2 billion in new local tax revenues

Consumer Savings

\$10.5 billion in lower electricity and natural gas bills by 2020 (growing to \$31.8 billion by 2030)

Climate Solutions

Reductions in global warming pollution equal to taking 36.4 million cars off the road

The UCS analysis was conducted at the national level and an additional breakout of state benefits was completed for the following 20 states. (see

http://www.ucsusa.org/clean_energy/clean_energy_policies/cashing-in.html)

California

Colorado

Florida

Indiana

Iowa

Maryland

Michigan

Minnesota

Missouri

New Jersey

New Mexico

New York

North Dakota

Ohio

Pennsylvania

South Dakota

Tennessee

Texas

Washington

Wisconsin