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COLORADO



**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510 - 3903

February 16, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you on Tuesday to discuss our shared commitment to securing America's energy independence by advancing the production and use of clean and renewable energy. I look forward to your upcoming visit to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, Colorado, which will surely provide us with critical research, continued development and strong support for your Advanced Energy Initiative.

You asked for our ideas on an action plan that will help free the country of its overdependence on foreign oil. In that regard, I wish to share with you a summary of a summit of national and state leaders on renewable energy that I convened in Denver just five weeks ago. Presenters at the summit included David Garman, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy, Dan Arvizu, Director, National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), Lee Edwards, President, BP Solar, John Hofmeister, President, Shell Oil Company, and state and local leaders on energy.

These presenters, and the summit attendees, offered current information and ideas for action on renewable energy, which deserve our careful consideration. I am pleased to enclose for your review a copy of the Report of the 2006 Colorado Renewable Energy Summit.

In light of the significance of renewable energy and new energy technologies to our national security, our economic competitiveness, and to the future of rural and agricultural America, I also offer ten specific recommendations for an action plan to set America free from its addiction to oil and to put our country on a new path toward greater energy security:

1. **Renewable Energy Target 25 x 25:** Set the ambitious goal of producing 25% of the total energy consumed in the United States from renewable resources (solar, biomass, wind, geothermal, new hydropower) by 2025. Your State of the Union

Address outlined some of the essential elements for achieving this goal, especially your solar and bio-fuels initiatives. And your experts at the Department of Energy assure me that this goal is achievable.

Specifically, I propose that you adopt a Renewable Energy Target of "25x25" for the domestic production and use of renewable energy, to be implemented by each state under a Department of Energy program that reflects the needs and realities of each region of the nation. This Renewable Energy Target will advance the dual goals of American energy independence and the revitalization of our rural economies and communities.

2. **National Renewable Energy Laboratory:** Restore, increase and protect funding for the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the nation's leading renewable energy research institution.
3. **Renewable Energy Production Tax Credits:** Extend existing Production Tax Credits through 2012 for electric power and liquid fuels produced from renewable resources to provide predictability for manufacturers and purchasers.
4. **Flexible Fuel Vehicles:** Increase the manufacture and use of advanced technology vehicles, including flex-fuel vehicles able to run on either petroleum or renewable fuels. In this regard, it would be helpful for you to endorse and work with us to pass S. 2025, the Vehicle and Fuel Choices for American Security Act. The Vehicle and Fuel Choices for American Security Act is strong bi-partisan legislation that will accomplish this goal by (1) providing retooling tax credits for manufacturers and suppliers of advanced flex-fuel vehicles; (2) lifting the per-manufacturer cap on consumer tax credits for the purchase of hybrids and advanced diesels; and (3) creating an R&D program for electric drive transportation and light-weight materials.
5. **Electric Transmission Capacity:** Expand access to existing and new transmission for renewable energy through federal legislation and incentives. And consider possible amendments to the Pole Attachment Act to facilitate the transmission of wind power and the provision of broadband internet service to rural areas.
6. **Hydrogen:** Support accelerated research and development to produce hydrogen with renewable energy, including utility scale storage and electric generating technologies.
7. **Small Business and Community Owned Renewable Energy Projects:** Provide federal grant funding for small, locally and community owned renewable energy projects, so that small businesses enjoy the benefit of a robust renewable energy economy.

8. **Rural Electric Associations:** Review federal statutory and regulatory requirements to determine whether changes can be made so Rural Electric Associations may buy and produce more electricity from renewable resources.
9. **Clean Coal Technologies:** Increase funding (to the levels authorized in the bipartisan Energy Policy Act of 2005) for new clean coal power technologies, including alternative methods of capturing and sequestering carbon dioxide from the existing fleet of coal fired power plants, to ensure the continued viability of coal as a domestic fuel source. And invest in new coal-to-liquids technologies, which offer a promising new domestic source of transportation fuels.
10. **Nuclear Power:** Promote responsible energy technologies that do not contribute to global warming and that do so without compromising safety or security. Nuclear power plants provide roughly 20% of America's electricity. As our country moves forward with nuclear power, we must ensure that these plants have the ability to withstand acts of terrorism, and we must ensure that nuclear power technologies do not make it easier for terrorists or nations to acquire material needed to make nuclear weapons. Finally, we must continue to work on providing safe, permanent storage for the resulting radioactive waste.

I congratulate you on the announcement of the Advanced Energy Initiative, and I look forward to working with you to promote the goals of American energy independence and clean, renewable energy.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar  
United States Senator

Copies: Hon. Pete Domenici, Chairman, Senate Energy Committee  
Hon. Jeff Bingaman, Ranking Member, Senate Energy Committee  
Hon. Samuel Bodman, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy  
Hon. David Garman, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy  
Dan Arvizu, Director, National Renewable Energy Laboratory