

Broad Coalition Urges Support for a Strong National Renewable Electricity Standard
Cosponsor S. 433 to Establish a Renewable Electricity Standard of 25 Percent by 2025

August 7, 2009

Dear Senator,

On behalf of our millions of members, we urge you to cosponsor S. 433, legislation to enact a national renewable electricity standard (RES) of 25 percent by 2025. A strong and robust national RES is an essential component of a comprehensive clean energy strategy and will create new jobs, stimulate the economy, establish the United States as a leader in the global clean energy industry, and help reduce global warming pollution.

While we appreciate the efforts that have been made by Chairman Bingaman and the Energy and Natural Resources Committee to include a national RES in the American Clean Energy Leadership Act, we are concerned that the legislation will fail to drive a significant expansion in the deployment of renewable energy in the United States.

Estimates show that the amount of renewable energy development resulting from the proposed RES requirement could be lower than expected growth in development as a result of the state RES standards and the financial incentives enacted by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects that current state and Federal policies will result in approximately 10.2 percent renewable generation by 2021. Due to utility exemptions, baseline deductions and opt-out provisions, renewable energy generation required under proposal may be as low as 8.1 percent by 2021, according to an analysis by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS).

We believe that a national RES that results in only marginal increases over business as usual would represent a missed opportunity to significantly advance U.S. interests in clean energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and grow our economy. It would also leave the potential for thousands of additional clean energy jobs unfulfilled.

The environmental, economic and consumer benefits of a strong RES of 25 percent by 2025 are well documented. Renewable energy is a rapidly deployable and cost-effective means for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Studies by both the EIA and UCS have found that the United States could reach 25 percent renewable electricity by 2025 at no net cost to energy consumers, and with savings on electricity and natural gas bills in some scenarios. Moreover, according to multiple Department of Energy analyses, a national RES mitigates the potential costs associated with an economy-wide cap on carbon pollution, as well as providing insulation against potential fossil fuel price spikes and price increases or shortages. In addition, a recent study by UCS found that an RES of 25 percent by 2025 would create 297,000 new jobs and save consumers \$64.3 billion in lower electricity and natural gas bills by 2025.

Multiple studies have also shown that every region in the country has sufficient resources to meet at least a standard of 25 percent by 2025. A recent analysis by the World Resources

Institute found that the Southeast in particular has sufficient renewable energy resources to meet 30 percent of the region's electricity needs within the next 15 years.

An RES of 25 percent by 2025 is achievable and necessary to advance our economic and environmental interests. As such, we strongly urge you to cosponsor S. 433.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

American Wind Energy Association
Audubon
Blue Green Alliance
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture)
Clean Water Action
Environment America
Environmental Law & Policy Center
Fresh Energy
League of Conservation Voters
Michigan Environmental Council
Pennsylvania Interfaith Climate Change Campaign
Pew Environment Group
Public Policy Virginia, Inc.
Sierra Club
Solar Energy Industries Association
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
Union of Concerned Scientists
Vote Solar
The Wilderness Society