



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact:
John Anthony
janthony@unfoundation.org
202.778.1639

WASHINGTON, DC—Today more than 30 businesses and organizations, ranging from the Sierra Club and the Center for American Progress to Mesa Power and Intel, signaled their support for expanding and upgrading America’s electric power transmission and distribution system to renew economic growth, strengthen national security, and address the threat of global climate change.

The broad-based group of businesses, environmental groups, energy companies, investors, and consumer advocates urged the government to put in place new national policies to rationalize and expedite the planning and deployment of new electric transmission resources, to bring the nation’s vast reserves of clean and renewable energy from remote areas to population centers, and to set standards and create incentives for smart grid technologies to modernize the electric system. The Energy Future Coalition-led group agrees that the existing framework for planning, developing and financing transmission infrastructure is too geographically fragmented, near-term focused, and procedurally cumbersome to adequately address national policy goals and maximize broad societal value.

To overcome these limitations, the vision recommends that Congress and the President establish “participatory and transparent planning at a national scale” for new interstate electric transmission networks using an “analytically robust process designed to engage all interested parties early and avoid later conflicts, minimize environmental impacts, and overcome the geographic and procedural limitations of current planning approaches.” The vision further calls for a simple, broad-based mechanism to spread investment costs broadly among ratepayers and consolidated certification and siting authority for urgently needed electric system investments identified in the planning process.

The EFC vision embraces the need to work closely with regional, state, and utility transmission planners to ensure that new national scale transmission plans “build on” rather than “duplicate or supplant already ongoing planning efforts at the utility and regional level.” Other important elements of the National Clean Energy Smart Grid Vision include:

- Strong financial incentives for rapid deployment of smart grid distribution and metering technologies.
- New policies to make electric grid security a priority, and to coordinate and pay for investments that will rapidly reduce the grid's vulnerability to cyber and physical attacks and natural disasters.
- Invest in education and training to create the workforce we will need to build, manage and maintain the National Clean Energy Smart Grid.

EFC's National Clean Energy Smart Grid vision statement and executive summary can be found at: <http://www.energyfuturecoalition.org/What-Were-Doing/-Smart-Grid>

The groups supporting the Grid Vision Statement were recruited by the Energy Future Coalition and its partner organizations. Reid Detchon, its executive director, said that "upgrading our nation's electric transmission and distribution system is a vital national priority – not only for meeting our environmental goals, but as a foundation for future economic growth." Detchon added that "America's economic health and national security depend critically on tapping our huge supplies of clean energy and investing in the infrastructure we need to become more energy efficient and productive."

Supportive statements from other members of the coalition include:

- "The Energy Future Coalition's Vision statement describing a new National Clean Energy Smart Grid is an important step toward implementation of the Pickens Plan. Building a new national power grid is a significant step in the move to a sound use of domestic, clean-burning resources, such as wind and solar energy. We have to get serious about reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and utilizing renewable energy and a new grid is an important step in that process," said **T. Boone Pickens**, founder and chairman, BP Capital Management. "I'm as committed to seeing the Pickens Plan become a reality as I was when I launched it on July 8. Now, we have an Army behind us, with 1.5 million members of a "New Energy Army" and alliances with other groups like the ones that we have joined with to develop this vision statement that will put pressure on Washington to achieve this plan, pressure I can assure you Washington has not seen before"
- "Rising energy costs, concerns about our dependence on foreign oil and global warming have sparked a national debate about America's energy future," said **Carl Pope**, President of the Sierra Club. "The Energy Future Coalition's vision aggressively moves us towards clean renewable power and true energy independence while minimizing impacts on natural and cultural resources through the establishment of a science-based, participatory and transparent planning process."
- "Solving today's grid-related challenges – planning, paying for, siting, modernizing, and safeguarding our electric system – will require a national effort with new technology, new investments, and new economic, regulatory, and political arrangements," said **John Podesta**, President of the Center for American Progress,

“EFC’s vision lays the foundation for creating a new nationwide grid that anticipates future needs.”

- “ITC supports EFC's plan for updating the regulation that governs our energy industry to help meet America's long term energy goals,” said **Joseph Welch**, President and CEO, ITC Holdings. “Private investment in the grid – like ITC's Green Power Express – is a crucial tool for boosting our economy and addressing pressing environmental challenges. Without the kinds of improvements proposed by EFC, companies like ITC will have difficulty making much-needed investment in the electric grid.”

For more information, or to arrange an interview, contact John Anthony via phone at 202.778.1639 or email at janthony@unfoundation.org.

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Vision Statement planning group:

American Wind Energy Association
Center for American Progress
Energy Future Coalition
Iberdrola Renewables
ITC Holdings
Mesa Power
National Wildlife Federation
Natural Resources Defense Council
Project for Sustainable FERC Energy Policy
Sierra Club
Solar Energy Industries Association

Additional Supporters:

Ausra
Babcock & Brown
BrightSource Energy
California Wind Energy Association
Center for Rural Affairs
Citizens Utility Board of Wisconsin
Digital Energy Solutions Campaign
E.ON Climate & Renewables North America Inc.
enXco
GlobalSmartEnergy
GreenVolts, Inc.
Infinia
Intel Corporation
InterWest Energy Alliance
Invenergy
Large-scale Solar Association

MMA Renewable Ventures
National Audubon Society
National Hydropower Association
Northwest Energy Coalition
Oerlikon Solar
OptiSolar
Pace Energy and Climate Center
Puget Sound Energy
Sharp Solar
Solar Nation
Solutia, Inc.
Sun Action Solar, LLC
Sundt Construction, Inc.
The Solar Alliance
The Stella Group
Union of Concerned Scientists
Vestas
Vote Solar Initiative
Western Grid Group
Wilderness Society
Wind on the Wires
Windustry

BACKGROUND

The Energy Future Coalition is a broad-based, non-partisan alliance that seeks to bridge the differences among business, labor, and environmental groups and identify energy policy options with broad political support. The coalition aims to bring about changes in U.S. energy policy to address the economic, security and environmental challenges related to the production and use of fossil fuels with a compelling new vision of the economic opportunities that will be created by the transition to a new energy economy.

Reid Detchon is Executive Director of the Climate and Energy program at the United Nations Foundation, in addition to his capacity as Executive Director of the Energy Future Coalition.

ITC Holdings is the first and largest fully independent transmission company in the U.S. with more than 15,000 circuit miles of transmission lines. ITC has invested over \$1 billion in the grid since it was formed in 2003. ITC's current footprint: Michigan, Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas (utility status), Oklahoma (utility status).

The Sierra Club is the oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization within the United States. With a membership of 1.3 million, the Sierra Club has been working since 1892 to protect communities, wild places and the planet itself.

Founded by T. Boone Pickens, Mesa Power Group, LLC is a renewable energy development company focused on large scale wind and solar energy development.

Through the efforts of the Pickens Plan, Boone is taking aim on reducing the United States dependency on foreign oil by creating public awareness and governmental action in the energy sector.

The Center for American Progress is a think tank dedicated to improving the lives of Americans through ideas and action. Founded in 2003, CAP is headed by John D. Podesta, former chief of staff to President Bill Clinton and professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. CAP is designed to provide long-term leadership and support to the progressive movement.