



Toward A New Mexico State Plan for Biofuels Leadership

For Immediate Release

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New Mexico Leaders Announce Strategic Initiative To Develop Sustainable Biofuels Industry

Santa Fe, NM (Dec. 9, 2009) – Gov. Bill Richardson and the New Mexico congressional delegation today launched an initiative to develop a statewide strategic plan to make New Mexico a national leader in the emerging biofuels industry.

“Clean, sustainable domestic sources of energy are the solution to America’s dependence on foreign oil,” Richardson said. “By focusing on New Mexico’s unique combination of climate and natural resources, scientific expertise, business infrastructure and economic policies, we are perfectly positioned to lead the country in the development and distribution of third-generation biofuels.”

The initial meeting for the initiative, “Toward a New Mexico State Plan for Biofuels Leadership,” will bring together more than 50 national and state experts from industry, science, education, agriculture, nonprofit and government at the Roundhouse to begin development of a comprehensive roadmap for sustainable, economically feasible and cost-competitive biofuels that capitalizes on the state’s human and natural resources.

“The Obama administration has made its commitment to biofuels clear,” said Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. “We are partnering with the administration on a strategy to advance clean energy technology with a multi-faceted plan for biofuels production that considers factors like land and water use, crop management, greenhouse gas emissions and jobs creation.”

“New Mexico is already a leader in developing next-generation biofuels like algae, and we have tremendous expertise within our state’s business sector, universities, and national laboratories to expand on our success,” said Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM). “This initiative will create a statewide plan to grow both the jobs of the future right here in New Mexico and homegrown fuel for the American economy.”

Richardson, Bingaman and Udall joined Rep. Harry Teague (D-NM), Rep. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM) in signing a letter of invitation to experts who will be the architects of the plan. “If we are ever going to end our dependence on foreign oil, we need to greatly expand domestic energy production. This initiative is focused on doing just that while creating good paying jobs and strengthening our national security,” said Rep. Harry Teague who earlier this year introduced the Biofuel Engineering Training Act and the Algae-based

Renewable Fuel Promotion Act of 2009 to support the growth of the biofuels industry in New Mexico.

“The advanced biofuels of tomorrow depend on research and technological entrepreneurship in states like New Mexico, known for our wealth of opportunities for renewable energy development,” Heinrich said. “Through ingenuity and strategic collaboration, we will unleash the full potential of this growing industry and put even more New Mexicans to work building the clean energy economy.”

“New Mexico has always been a leader in the advancement of clean energy,” Lujan said. “Investment in clean, renewable energy supports local job growth and economic development in all areas of the economy, from agriculture to science and technology. I am pleased that our state is investing in a detailed plan for biofuels production.”

The Dec. 9 kick-off meeting was coordinated by the Southwestern Biofuels Association (www.swbiofuels.org), a non-profit organization that promotes renewable biofuels through strategic partnerships between the Southwest’s universities, national laboratories, state agencies, agriculture, energy industry and consumers.

Participants will meet over the next three months to develop specific recommendations and strategies focused on sustainable feedstocks, energy markets, science, research and development, production and distribution, jobs, education and outreach. The public will be invited to attend workgroup sessions and comment on elements of the plan as it develops. An Advisory Panel including representatives from the state’s biofuels industry and supporting organizations also will provide input to the plan that will be unveiled April 13-14, 2010, at the SWBA Biofuels Policy Summit in Albuquerque. The plan will be open for public comment until May 30, 2010.

Plan documents, meeting dates, times and locations and other information will be posted on the SWBA Web site www.swbiofuels.org. Interested parties can post comments via the Web site as documents become available for review.

“The extraordinary level of cooperation between policymakers, industry, scientists and farmers is a major step forward for the timely development of next-generation biofuels with low energy inputs, large production potential and easy distribution,” said Tim Zenk, SWBA chairman and vice president of Sapphire Energy (www.sapphireenergy.com). “We look forward to working with this distinguished group of experts on viable solutions to achieving energy independence.”

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