
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: August 17, 2006
TO: City Council Members
FROM: Jennifer Bruno, Policy Analyst
RE: Resolution endorsing the vision of “25 by ‘25” to support the Third Annual American Renewable Energy Day

In early June, 2006, both houses of the US Congress introduced a concurrent resolution, stating a goal to secure one-fourth of the nation’s total energy from renewable sources (such as wind, solar, biomass, biodiesel, etc), by the year 2025. According to the US Department of Energy, current consumption of renewable sources of energy are between 5 and 6 percent. This goal has been dubbed “25 by ‘25.”

The resolution before the Council, authored by the Office of the Mayor, states the Council and Mayor’s endorsement of the vision of this legislation.

In the Senate, the effort is being led by Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley (R-Iowa). The resolution is backed by more than 30 lawmakers from both political parties. Other lead sponsors include: Ken Salazar (D-Colo.), Dick Lugar (R-Ind.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Reps. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.), Collin Peterson (D - Minn), Marilyn Musgrave (R-Colo.) and Mark Udall (D-Colo.). While President Bush has not endorsed the specific resolution, in the 2006 State of the Union address, he did set a goal of replacing 75% of our oil imports from the Middle East by 2025.

In addition, many environmental groups, farmers and agricultural groups, and the “big 3” US Automakers (Ford Motor Company, General Motors, and DaimlerChrysler) support the resolution. In the past the automobile industry has been a stumbling block to energy-related resolutions. The resolution currently in Congress, does not address energy efficiency (usually the chief concern for the automobile industry), but does call for increasing the renewable supply of energy.

The supporters of this resolution view this goal as crucial in terms of reducing the dependence of the US on Foreign oil. The resolution does not contain specifics about how to achieve this goal, but lawmakers have committed that over the next few months these details will be worked out, such as:

- The amount of land lawmakers expect to use to achieve this goal
- Some measurement to make sure the net environmental benefit is tangible

- Whether or not this specific target is attainable, and by what means it would be most likely (ethanol technology vs. other biofuel processes, solar or wind power, etc.)

The attached resolution transmitted to the Council from the Administration states that the Mayor and City Council endorse the vision of 25 x '25 and will commit to work collaboratively with renewable energy advocates to further explore and define the contributions that the agricultural and forestry sectors can make to a sustainable energy system, and develop an action plan to bring this vision to life.

Resolution Language

WHEREAS, current and future risks to U.S. energy security are mounting;

WHEREAS, domestic and global energy demands are growing exponentially;

WHEREAS, environmental and health concerns and risks associated with fossil fuel-based sources are escalating;

WHEREAS, solar, bio-, and wind energy and bio-fuels can be captured and produced on the landmass managed by U.S. agriculture and forest landowners; and,

WHEREAS, technology and production capabilities allow America's farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners to play a major role in ensuring a fully sustainable U.S. energy system;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and City Council endorse the vision of 25 x '25 and commit to work collaboratively with renewable energy advocates to:

- Further explore and define the contributions that the agricultural and forestry sectors can make to a sustainable energy system, and*
- Develop an action plan to bring this vision to life.*

Dated this ____ day of August, 2006.