

OHIO'S

ENERGY FUTURE TOUR

Ohio's Energy Future Tour Final Report: Executive Summary

Ohio's 21st century energy policy should embrace cleaner resources and technological innovation to benefit both businesses and consumers. An energy future centered around these characteristics would invigorate a rapidly growing renewable energy and energy efficiency market that diversifies the state's portfolio, establish market certainty, ensure reliability and affordability, transform access to the grid, promote sustainable communities, and leave a healthy legacy for future generations. To transform this vision into reality requires policies that reflect bold leadership, emphasize long-term planning and leverage the regional strengths of the state. *That process should begin with Ohio policymakers reinstating meaningful and required renewable energy and energy efficiency standards.*

Ohio's Energy Future Tour identified five goals representing key characteristics of a 21st century clean energy vision. The goals are further defined by underlying themes that were voiced repeatedly in the regional forums.

Goal: Affordability

- *Clean energy technologies are increasingly cost competitive.*
- *Energy efficiency is a critical element in reducing demand and costs.*
- *Renewable energy and energy efficiency are the smartest ways for Ohio to meet new federal regulations.*

Goal: Adaptability, Reliability, and Security

- *Clean energy technologies and innovative programs are a response to the growing demand for new models of producing and consuming energy.*
- *Decentralized systems and advanced technologies play an increasingly important role in protecting against threats at home and around the world.*

Goal: Certainty & Economic Development

- *Ohio companies and businesses will benefit from the growth of a clean energy economy.*
- *Businesses need policy certainty when considering significant new investment and expansion.*

Goal: Protection of Public Health and Improved Quality of Life

- *Clean energy is a pathway to decreasing the incidence of preventable diseases and chronic conditions.*
- *Clean energy is a catalyst for reducing hospital costs and improving health care.*
- *Clean energy improves quality of life and creates sustainable and successful communities.*

Goal: Innovation

- *Clean energy innovation creates significant investment opportunities.*
- *Clean energy powers the academic enterprise and provides opportunities for Ohio talent and training.*

Four policy recommendations emerged that would move Ohio forward on achieving these goals.

- ***Reinstate meaningful and required Renewable Portfolio and Energy Efficiency Standards***
- ***Develop a cost-effective State Plan for compliance with the Clean Power Plan to reduce carbon emissions from Ohio's electric power sector***
- ***Increase distributed generation, aggregation and net metering opportunities***
- ***Repeal restrictive set-back requirements for wind farms***

Ohio's Energy Future Tour is a collaboration among businesses, trade associations, nonprofit organizations, and local governments, designed to provide an opportunity for citizens around the state to share the positive impact that renewable energy and energy efficiency have had on economic development and quality of life

The Tour's six regional forums took place over the course of six months, reached over 800 people, and spanned more than 700 miles. The forums provided perspectives from over 70 issue experts and community leaders, ample opportunity for public dialogue, and special presentations on energy-related issues and reports. Audiences included a diverse mix of local residents, with over a third representing regional business interests. Forum discussions covered a wide range of topics – including electricity costs, economic development, energy independence, public health, and environmental protection – all focused on moving Ohio's energy future forward. Over the course of the Tour the message was clear: Ohioans want a clean energy future. This is a viable, rapidly growing industry sector, with business and community leaders eager to take advantage of the new job creation, cost savings, and improvement in quality of life that have accompanied its rise.

As a result of the enthusiasm, commitment and desire to participate displayed at the forums, the Tour developed a statement of support, or pledge, for the many benefits that renewable energy and energy efficiency are bringing to the state. To date, more than 10,000 signatures and emails have been collected either at the forums or online, urging policymakers to include these cost competitive technologies in a new energy vision for Ohio. Participating organizations will continue to collect signatures on the pledge to demonstrate sustained public support for clean energy and engagement in this dialogue.

Ohio, having achieved a position of leadership in the clean energy arena, should not relinquish that role at a time when others are moving forward. With its natural resources, skilled workforce, robust manufacturing base, and world-class innovation, Ohio should remain at the forefront of the drive to implement new forms of energy generation, distribution, and use. The good news is that it's not too late – Ohio can get back on track with the right combination of leadership, public policy and private action.

Paving the way to a new energy vision