

SUBMITTED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Statement of Governor Chris Gregoire  
State of Washington

Before the

Senate Environment & Public Works (EPW) Committee  
July 21, 2009

Chairs and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present Washington State's view on energy, and more specifically, on the "green jobs" that will come with a clean energy future.

In Washington State we believe many of the jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Economy will be related to energy. In its July 2009 report, the President's Council of Economic Advisers report that growth in energy and environmental related occupations is projected at 52% for the period of 2000 through 2016, while growth in all other occupations is estimated at 14%. In Washington State, we are banking on that for our economic future. With your help, we are acting now to lay the groundwork to come out of this recession even stronger than when the slowdown began.

In partnership with the private sector, Washington has been aggressively pursuing alternative energy strategies since before the current recession. In 2006, by initiative of the people, the citizens of Washington State affirmatively declared that their future would include a growing use of clean energy. We have had tax incentives for wind and solar energy projects in place since 1996, adding landfill gases and fuel cells in recent years. Earlier this month, we added state tax incentives for biomass energy, ocean energy, geothermal, anaerobic digestion, and waste heat energy.

With these commitments, in combination with federal incentives secured by Senators Cantwell and Murray with your help, Washington State is now the 5th largest producer of wind power in the nation, up from nothing in 2001 and now 5<sup>th</sup> of 36 states producing wind power. We are building solar-power components, growing and refining biofuels, and making break-throughs in tidal energy. Just two weeks ago, a company announced it will build what would be the largest solar panel energy generation plant in the United States in a town called Cle Elum that, interestingly, was once a coal town.

We have McKinstry in Seattle leading the way in construction of green buildings; Inland Empire Oilseeds in Odessa with a multi-million dollar biofuel plant; and Blue Marble Energy and Bionavitas working to turn algae into fuel. We are also fortunate to have the Pacific Northwest National Lab in Richland, Washington.

With the ongoing belief these new opportunities hold the key to emerging more strongly from this recession, the state legislature recently created a Clean Energy Leadership Council, a public-

private collaboration tasked with identifying the necessary investments, policies and partnerships for our state to be a leader in the clean energy economy.

Our energy strategy is a job creation strategy. In 2007, when we adopted a set of climate change goals related to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and reduced fuel use, we also set a goal to triple the number of green jobs we had in the state – to reach 25,000 green jobs by 2020. Less than two years later, we can point to 47,000 green jobs right now. Our green jobs are growing much faster than predicted. These jobs range from computer software engineers for the smart grid to power line workers, from green building architects to weatherization technicians, and from bioenergy venture capitalists to oilseed farmers. Washington labor market information agency has shown real leadership in developing the tools to quantify green job efforts, and we are working with other states and private, non-profit institutions to promote solid measurement of green jobs around the country. We learned green jobs are not necessarily some brand new type of job – they are often jobs we all know, only now they include new skills to meet the needs of the new century – for example, the electrician who can wire a smart home.

In Washington State, our commitment to green jobs is fundamentally a commitment to **high quality, living wage** jobs. The key to these jobs is innovative companies and highly skilled workers. I appreciate the support you are showing for the training needs that are emerging in the green economy. Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Congress and the Administration has provided significant resources to fund the *Green Jobs Act of 2007* to invest in energy workforce training opportunities. Additionally, with the work of Senator Murray and many here, the Recovery Act increased funding to the Workforce Investment Act. I am creating an incentive fund using the WIA 10% to be used as matching awards for local WIA formula funds that Workforce Development Councils use for direct training in green jobs that promote alternative energy and energy efficiency. These funds will also be used to build capacity at our community and technical colleges as well as leverage other Recovery funds. You can count on Washington State to continue to pursue these funds creatively and aggressively.

Like President Obama wrote in his July 12 *Washington Post* op-ed, “[o]ur community colleges can serve as 21<sup>st</sup>-century job training centers, working with local businesses to help workers learn the skills they need to fill the jobs of the future.” As you look to expand training opportunities in the green economy, again, we are doing our part, particularly through our own terrific community college system. Innovative curriculum examples include: Bates Technical College, green construction and remodeling; Bellevue College certificate in green/sustainable design; Columbia Basin College, solar and photovoltaic design; Cascadia Community College has an environmental technologies and sustainable practices curricula including solar specialties and energy management skills. Clover Park Technical, Edmonds, North Seattle, Shoreline, Skagit Valley, South Seattle, South Puget Sound, and Wenatchee Valley College all have similar and creative programs.

I would also invite you to look at ways to encourage apprenticeship as a model for green jobs training. Apprenticeship programs have the industry expertise, established networks and needed flexibility to meet the challenges of this rapidly evolving new industry sector. Because registered apprenticeship is controlled at the local level by employers and employees - created jointly and sustained by labor and management – it is uniquely positioned to respond quickly to

industry changes and technological advancements. In Washington State, we are already seeing apprenticeship programs making the shift to industry demand around green jobs. One program in Southwest Washington added a full year to its residential electrician training program in order to include training on solar panels and home technology integration (Smart Houses). The Machinists in Seattle are now offering training on wind turbine technology. The Seattle area Pipe Trades apprenticeship has a class for apprentices to receive a “Green Awareness” certificate. The class covers a vast array of topics including high efficiency appliances and fixtures, water conservation, distribution systems, and irrigation and reuse systems.

In addition to providing high quality on-the-job-training, apprenticeship also offers the kind of career paths that will give workers the opportunity to earn a living in good, family wage jobs. The jobs we are talking about are typically in the construction trades and provide good wages and benefits.

As Governor, I have been committed to expanding apprenticeship opportunities. In Washington State, we have almost doubled the number of apprentices since I took office. We have also created a pre-apprenticeship program, “Running Start for the Trades,” that links high school students to high quality apprenticeship programs. We have made a commitment to our veterans by supporting “Helmets to Hardhats,” a program that gives veterans direct entry to apprenticeship programs and allows credit for military training.

We think apprenticeships offer an excellent training model as we move forward with our Green Jobs initiative. Our goal with training programs and apprenticeship strategies is to create strong career ladders in the green economy, growing family wage jobs and not just short term employment opportunities.

I’d like to speak briefly to the relationship between energy and climate. In effect, energy policy and climate policy are of the same cloth – the actions needed to secure our energy future are the same as those needed to respond to the imperatives of climate change science. Both energy and climate point in the same direction, and we have taken actions that, by necessity, address both in tandem – actions such as clean energy tax incentives, renewable energy standards, and strong energy efficiency standards for buildings and appliances. Just last month, the Western Governors – to include those of us from the 19 western states and 3 western territories – adopted a policy that urges Congress and the President to act decisively to create a national policy to that reduces greenhouse gas emissions in a manner that is both consistent with the findings of scientific research and encourages job growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship. I have submitted that policy for the record.

I’ve come to this hearing from a National Governors’ Association meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi. There, I co-chaired an Economic Development & Commerce Committee session devoted to discussing how states and the nation will emerge from this recession by virtue of technological innovations in the areas of energy as well as, for example, the life sciences. I assure you that what I’ve described in Washington State is proving true around the county.

Governors and states are actively charting a course toward the next century, making critical investments in the research and development, training, and infrastructure to support private

sector success. Your actions in this committee – looking at comprehensive energy and climate legislation – are a central part of those efforts in terms of moving us toward a new energy future. That is precisely what governors are looking to Congress for.

I know that there are many Committees working on this issue and I believe that is a good thing. Energy and climate issues cross so many facets of our lives that it is as vital for Congress to work collaboratively and cooperatively across committees as it is for the President and me to have our many agencies doing the same thing. For green jobs, specifically, I believe the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee's work can also be quite instructive for supporting and retooling many excellent training programs already in place.

With the permission of the Chairs, I would like to add one additional document to be made a part of the record. This document is a statement of principles signed by a bipartisan coalition of 31 governors from every corner and region of our country. Our coalition calls on Congress to pass comprehensive energy policy legislation that breaks our dependence on foreign oil by making investments in using energy more efficiently and producing more clean energy here in the United States. These steps will generate the very green jobs we've been talking about today.

Forbes magazine ranked Washington in the top five states in which to do business and in the top five "green" states. I feel strongly that what you are doing here in Washington, DC is helping to make success possible, both in our state and around the country and, frankly, to position the United States of America to be a global leader in the "green" technological innovations of the future.

In closing, I want to thank you for the efforts you are making – for the substantial federal commitment you have made – and need to continue to make – to promote energy independence and alternative energy sources, and to ensure our economic recovery.

Thank you for your time today and thank you for your work. I am happy to take any questions you have.