



# EESI Update

Summer  
2008

Environmental and Energy Study Institute ...advancing innovative solutions!

## EESI Moves & "Greens" New Office Space

After 24 years on Capitol Hill, we moved our offices to 1112 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC on April 1. In preparing for the move, we looked for opportunities to reduce our carbon footprint and be even gentler to the earth. For example, we installed a shower to encourage employees to ride bikes to work. We designed walls with clearstory windows to bring natural lighting to interior spaces. We specified the use of low VOC paint and installed biobased carpeting thanks to a discount offered by *Interface Flor*. Offices have motion sensor light switches to reduce energy usage; and we immediately installed compact fluorescents light bulbs where applicable. We replaced more of our old CRT monitors with energy efficient LCD monitors. The mover provided reusable, stackable boxes so we avoided packing in disposable cardboard. We will, of course, continue our previous practices of recycling and reusing as much as possible; using 100% post-consumer recycled, chlorine-free copy paper; buying environmentally friendly cleaning products; using bio-based cutlery, cups and plates for meetings; providing public transportation benefits to staff and interns; and more. We send a special thank you to all of the donors who contributed to our "Operation Green Office" to make many of these actions possible.



## Plug-ins On Capitol Hill

In celebration of Earth Day, EESI helped organize a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) "ride-and-drive" on the Capitol



Mall on Sunday April 20, 2008, the House side on April 22 and the Senate side on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. There were two of the same vehicle, a XH-150 - a modified 2007 Saturn Vue Greenline SUV developed by AFS Trinity Corp., based in Bellevue, Washington, that gets up to 150 miles-per-gallon equivalent. Its energy storage system combines lithium-ion batteries with ultracapacitors. Adding ultracapacitors allows the vehicle to achieve top speeds and rapid acceleration in electric-only mode equal to a conventional hybrid. For a typical daily commute of 40 miles round trip, the vehicle does not use its internal combustion engine at all. (AFS Trinity is an EESI Associate.)

EESI Senior Policy Associate Fred Beck contacted staff at both General Motors and the US Post Office about the event – which paid off. The top Post Office buyer and four of his staff spent over an hour with the AFS Trinity team. Additionally, GM's top man in DC dropped by and went for a very long drive. A shift to manufacturing flexible-fuel PHEVs could revitalize the American auto industry by positioning domestic automakers as leaders in this emerging technology. A September 2007 Harris National Study found that more than one quarter of vehicle owners would consider purchasing a PHEV as their next vehicle. Nissan recently announced they plan to have a PHEV in the market by 2010.

## Inside this issue:

- 2** EESI Testifies Before Congress
- 2** EESI "Out and About"
- 3** Getting Ready for the New Administration
- 3** Forestry Update
- 4** Recent EESI Briefings & Events
- 4** International Parliamentarians Discuss Renewable Energy
- 5** Staffers Discuss Technologies
- 5** Climate Change Legislation Debated
- 5** Advancing High Performance Buildings
- 6** Reaching Out
- 6** State Incentives for Advanced Biofuels
- 6** New Staff at EESI
- 7** EESI Publications to the Rescue
- 7** World Travelers and Advisors
- 7** New Partners for Planning, Energy and Climate Change Project
- 8** Imaginative and Inspired - Creative EESI Supporters

## EESI Testifies Before Congress



EESI Executive Director, Carol Werner, testified Feb. 7, 2008 at a Senate Energy and Natural Resources hearing on biofuels. We expressed strong support for the expanded Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) enacted as part of the Energy Independence and

Security Act of 2007 (EISA). The RFS calls for a total of 36 billion gallons of renewable fuels by 2022, with 21 billion gallons of this to be advanced biofuels (i.e., derived from biomass other than cornstarch) which will be required to meet a 50-60 percent reduction in lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions compared to the petroleum product it is replacing. Carol discussed the importance of the greenhouse gas (GHG) “screens” as a way to guarantee that the RFS accomplishes real carbon reductions. She also discussed the importance of fixing the definition of ‘Renewable Biomass’ in the RFS regarding the use of woody biomass from federal and private lands. Currently, the definition excludes all materials from federal land. Carol made the argument that broad exclusions rule out a large quantity of feedstocks that do not induce a land use change, while not protecting forests from some of the most prevalent dangers such as wildfire and urban encroachment. Instead, the opportunity was missed to allow biomass utilization to be used as a tool to increase the quality of sustainable forestry and achieve a number of management objectives, such as fuel reduction, habitat management, and other types of restoration forestry, which provide multiple values to the country's forests.

On May 6, Jetta Wong, EESI’s Senior Policy Associate of the Sustainable Biomass and Energy Program, testified before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the “U.S. Helsinki Commission”) regarding the complexities involved in the rise in food prices and that there are a number of factors that influence the price of food. One fundamental cause is higher energy costs, documented by an April 2008 study by Texas A&M University. Much of the media has jumped to point fingers at biofuels without doing due diligence on the issue. Rather, a number of demand and supply factors are currently influencing world food prices including production shortfalls due to severe drought (especially in Australia and Ukraine), diminishing commodity stock levels, soaring energy costs, the falling dollar, changing

demand due to new consumption patterns (China and India), speculation in financial markets, bans on grain exports by numerous countries, as well as the production of biofuels from agricultural commodities. She said, “It is critically important that **sustainable** biomass be considered a part of the strategy to not just reduce energy costs, which it is doing now, but also to revitalize agriculture, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and restore the United States as a world leader.” She noted that sustainable biomass can use a wide variety of locally appropriate feedstocks, including agriculture residues, wood wastes, forest thinnings and other waste materials that **do not induce a land use change nor impact food supply**, along with using sound production practices at the appropriate scale.

## EESI “Out and About”

Other conference and event presentations made by EESI staff include:

- 1/16/08 – National Council on Science and the Environment, “Climate change: Science and Solutions”
- 2/20-21 – Power-Gen Renewable Energy Conference, Las Vegas, NV, ran three sessions
- 1/28/08 - Harvesting Clean Energy Conference (Pacific Northwest) on RFS and other federal issues.
- 2/4/08 – Association of State Energy Research & Technology Transfer Institutions (ASERTTI) Conference, the role of USDA in energy
- 2/5/08 – National Association of Regional Councils – National Conference of Regions, “The Federal Debate and National Impact: Energy, Climate Change, Global Warming”
- 2/22/08 – School presentation on Climate Change
- 2/25/08 – South Carolina biomass Council, presentation on federal biomass policy
- 3/2/08 – Clean Cities Energy Independence Days, “climate & Transportation Policy Primer”
- 3/3/08 - Energy, Climate and Environmental Conference at the House of Sweden, “Renewable Resources and the Bioenergy Challenges”
- 3/3/08 – Biomass Coordinating Council meeting
- 3/5/08 – Washington International Renewable Energy Conference (WIREC), session on sustainable biofuels
- 3/6/08 – WIREC side event “Engaging Stakeholder Involvement”
- 3/6/08 – Rocky Mountain Land Institute, Denver, CO “Planning for a New Energy and Climate Future”



- 3/10/08 – Delegation from Estonia –biomass technologies and policy
- 3/10/08 – National League of Cities, National Congressional City Conference, “Going Green” Gets a Boost: New Federal Funds for Local Initiatives”
- 3/25/08 – North Carolina Biomass Council meeting on the Farm Bill and federal biomass policy
- 4/22/08 Growing Cooler Symposium, University of Maryland, “Federal Policies to Promote Energy-Smart Development”
- 4/29/08 – American Planning Association National Conference. Las Vegas, “Planning and Climate Change: Goals, Plans and Policies”
- 5/7/08 – National Brownsfields Conference, Detroit MI, “Redevelopment as a Response to Climate Change”
- 5/27/08 – Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Ethanol Regional Impacts Workshop

## Getting Ready for the New Administration



[The National Energy Center for Sustainable Communities](#) (NECSC), in partnership with [The Johnson Foundation](#), held several leadership summits over the past two years to review the nation's sustainable

development goals in light of global warming, and to build a five-year action plan. EESI's Carol Werner has been a participant in this series of National Climate Summits held at Wingspread. Ideas and principles from this process have been utilized by the [Presidential Climate Action Project](#) to develop a non-partisan plan for presidential leadership in the first 100 days of a new administration - [The Presidential Climate Action Plan](#) (PCAP). PCAP represents a specific and comprehensive blueprint for bold leadership, rooted in climate science and designed to ignite innovation at every level of the American economy, rooted in the conviction that we must build an innovative, environmentally-sound economy for the new realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. That economy must achieve three goals for this and future generations: **security, opportunity and stewardship**. The first version of the plan is available from the PCAP website, and the Project welcomes feedback. The website includes a wealth of other materials including [The Wingspread Principles on the US Response to Global Warming](#). EESI will be conducting a briefing on PCAP once it is finalized.

## Forestry Update

Our woody biomass initiative continues to develop on a number of fronts. Our discussion series has expanded, bringing our total number of participants to 246 – representing foresters, land managers, academics, researchers, environmental NGOs, public decision makers, and energy producers. We continue to engage this network on a number of topics, including forest sustainability, feedstock assessment, environmental impacts, upcoming research, etc. Based on their input, we have compiled a list of the most pressing research needs and knowledge gaps. A particularly important issue to many of our contacts is the definition of renewable biomass in the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), enacted as part of the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA). Even though the RFS contains “screens” requiring fuels to meet standards of life-cycle carbon reduction, the definition excludes feedstocks coming from all federal forests and many private forests.

Most small community groups, land-based conservation organizations, and other organizations involved in on-the-ground management of natural resources see the inherent value in biomass utilization. On a daily basis, these groups face the consequences of catastrophic wildfire, development pressures, and stagnant or declining rural economies. These groups see building markets for biomass as a positive force that could bring jobs back to working landscapes, provide paying alternatives to development, and allow communities to take an active role in sustainable stewardship of the forest resource for a multitude of values. These groups understand that the least sustainable forest is the one you can't afford to keep. We have a broad array of organizations with very significant professional and academic expertise and a great deal of history and experience as part of our working group.

Working with the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition, the National Woodland Owners Association, and others,

we plan to bring together a loose coalition of interested groups and individuals to explore this issue further and identify key elements of a renewable biomass definition that could achieve a high level of consensus while incentivizing good environmental stewardship.



## Recent EESI Briefings & Events

In 2007, EESI reached more than 4,300 attendees through a record-breaking 35 EESI Congressional briefings and events.

Attracting a sizable and wide-ranging audience including Congressional staff, media, businesses, environmentalists, government officials and others, EESI briefings are an invaluable addition to the policymaking process. In addition to providing reliable information, they create issue visibility, spur hearings, develop Congressional leadership, attract media coverage and affect policy positions. Because of EESI's reputation for high quality, balanced events, we are able to feature top-notch scientific and industry. Thus far in 2008, we have had an average briefing audience of 110, with 17 briefings and events under our belt. Since our last issue of *EESI Update*, we have organized the following events:



- [Renewable Energy Payments in the US: Prospects and Perspectives](#) 6/18/08
- [Renewable Energy and Transmission: Opportunities and Barriers](#) 6/13/08
- [Woody Biomass: Scale and Sustainability](#) 5/15/08
- [High Performance Manufactured Housing: Success Stories From Mississippi's Response to Hurricane Katrina](#) 5/14/08—See story on page 5.
- [Can Renewable Energy Meet the Urgent Challenge of Climate Change?](#) 5/6/08
- [Growing Cooler: Policies for Climate-Friendly Development and Transportation](#) 4/25/08



- [Congressional Plug-in Hybrid Ride & Drive](#) 4/22-4/23/08—See story on page 1.
- [Water Availability: A Matter of Quantity, Quality and Use](#) 3/20/08
- [Parliamentarian Luncheon on Renewable Energy and Climate Change held in conjunction with Washington International Renewable Energy Conference 2008 \(WIREC\)](#) 3/5/08—See story below.

- [Competitiveness and the Future of Carbon Trading: A View from Europe](#) 2/29/08
- [Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: Reviewing FY 2009 Budget Request and Key Tax Incentives](#) 2/14/08
- [The Effects of Climate Change on Forest Resources](#) 2/11/08
- [EESI/APA Partner Dialogue Meeting](#) 2/7/08—See pg 5.
- [State Energy Activities- Innovative Solutions and Funding Issues](#) 2/5/08
- [Beyond CAFE: Tackling Transportation in Climate Policy](#) 1/17/08
- [Green Collar Jobs: Why Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency are Economic Powerhouses](#) 11/8/07

## International Parliamentarians Discuss Renewable Energy

Working with the House and Senate Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucuses, EESI helped organize a parliamentarian luncheon on March 5, 2008, in conjunction with the Washington International



Renewable Energy Conference (WIREC). Parliamentarians from Germany, Spain, Melanesia-Solomon

Islands, Romania, New Zealand, Portugal, Greece, Argentina, and Brazil, gathered with their peers from the House of Representatives to discuss what their countries can do, and are doing, individually and globally to advance renewable energy and energy efficiency. Issues discussed included international agreements and trade, mandatory vs. voluntary targets for energy from renewables, feed-in tariffs vs. renewable electricity standards, and the need to raise public awareness and familiarity with existing renewable energy technologies.





## Staffers Discuss Technologies

Working with the offices of Senators Bernard Sanders (I-VT), Robert Menendez (D-NJ), and Maria Cantwell (D-WA), EESI is co-sponsoring a series of informal conversations about renewable energy technologies. The series is designed to help Senate staffers better understand how different renewable energy technologies work and the possibilities they present. After each briefing, the speaker presentations will be made available on the EESI website at [www.eesi.org](http://www.eesi.org). The first meeting, held May 16, 2008, explored the potential of concentrating solar power.

A small group of energy experts will lead each interactive discussion, and will answer a variety of questions, including: How does the technology work?

- Where is it currently used and where can it be deployed?
- How much of our energy could we get from the technology?
- What are the upfront costs and long term benefits?
- How many design, construction, operation, & maintenance jobs are created?

EESI also is working with the House Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus to coordinate a similar discussion series this summer and fall.

## Climate Change Legislation Debated in Senate

The long awaited debate on the Boxer-Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act of 2008 (S. 3036) ended almost before it began. The legislation would cap emissions of greenhouse gases from covered sources at 19 percent below current levels by 2020 and 71 percent below current levels in 2050 through a market-based trading program for businesses to meet the cap. Debate began on June 2 and June 6, by a vote of 48-36, the Senate fell short of the 60 votes necessary to invoke cloture (cut off a filibuster) on the bill. Of the 16 Senators not present to vote, six entered statements indicating they would have voted 'yes.' While the debate never addressed key issues and amendments that will be critical to any future climate change legislation, 54 Senators in all spoke up for the need to advance serious legislation on global warming, surpassing the 43 votes garnered in previous climate change votes (2003 and 2005). This included 10 Senators who had not supported cap-and-trade climate legislation in prior votes.



## Advancing High Performance Buildings

Accounting for more than 40 percent of total US annual energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, buildings are a critical component of a low-carbon future. Energy-efficient buildings that use renewable energy represent one of the most important and cost-effective



solutions for mitigating climate change. However, being "green" is not enough. If a green building is destroyed or rendered nonfunctional during a storm, how valuable is it? Low-energy buildings must also meet other critical attributes such as durability, occupant health and safety, accessibility, and affordability if they are to be valuable to the people who own them, use them, finance and insure them.

Congress has sought to address this issue by defining a "high performance building" in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Sec. 914) and EISA '07 (Sec. 401). EPAAct required the buildings industry to assess standards that relate to high performance buildings (this effort is almost complete) and a new technical assistance and grant program to support the development of voluntary consensus-based standards for high performance buildings that are based on the findings of the assessment. EISA required the General Services Administration to set up a new office on high performance buildings and set goals for commercial buildings and **requirements** for federal buildings to be carbon neutral by 2030. EESI is working with policymakers, industry organizations, product manufacturers, and many others to look at a variety of policy options that will decrease the total energy used by buildings, while at the same time improving the health, safety, comfort, and productivity of building occupants. Our May 14 briefing on [High Performance Manufactured Housing](#) presented the potential of high quality factory-built housing to serve a dual role as disaster-relief shelter AND long-term affordable housing. (See our website for more information.)



## Reaching Out

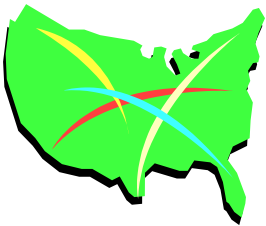
EESI is revising our website—our new website will be a content management system (CMS), making it easier for users to find exactly what they want – a critical improvement because our website is so content rich. As part of the process, we collected data on how visitors use our current website. Many visitors find us through search engines while looking for specific topics, such as biomass energy, green collar jobs, Congressional



appropriations, and the low carbon fuel standard. Our most popular web pages are those for our programs, newsletters, and recent briefings. Currently popular pages include our FY09 budget analyses, as well as our cellulosic ethanol, hydropower, nuclear loan guarantee, and renewable portfolio standard briefings. We are still getting dozens of calls about SEER 13 (air conditioning efficiency standards) generated by a fact sheet we produced in 2002 (it is listed at the top of most web searches on the topic). Under the initiative of a recent intern, EESI also has created pages on Good2gether.com and Change.org. If you are a member of any of these pages, be sure to look us up and join our group or add us as a friend!

## State Incentives for Advanced Biofuels

With the goal of determining what incentives best support the commercialization of environmentally sustainable, low-carbon, advanced (non-corn starch



based) renewable fuel technologies, EESI has undertaken a project to produce a *State Policymakers Guide to Advanced Biofuel Incentives*. EESI will be examining existing state policies that help deploy advanced biofuels, such as California's low carbon fuel standard and the University of Tennessee Biofuel Initiative. The guidebook will include the top incentives that are most effective in enhancing the economic viability of advanced biofuel technology projects and include information about complementary policies, so that states can position themselves to help meet federal biofuels mandates.

## New Staff at EESI



EESI has named Ellen Larson Vaughan to fill its newly created position of Policy Director. Ellen will be helping develop and manage an Institute-wide effort to contribute to the design and adoption of policies that control US greenhouse gas emissions, with a focus on the role that

green buildings and energy efficient and renewable energy technologies can play. "Ellen brings considerable policy experience as well as great knowledge of the building sector. This will be critical as EESI addresses energy and climate change challenges and opportunities in 2008," said Carol Werner. Ellen has more than 20 years of experience in energy policy, building design/construction, and government relations. Previously, she worked for Steven Winter Associates, a building systems and architectural/engineering consulting firm, where she functioned as the Program and Policy Manager of the Sustainable Buildings Industry Council.

EESI also has hired Meghan Condon as a Fellow with our Sustainable Communities and Transportation Program, starting May 7. Meghan comes to us prepared to hit the ground running, having interned for the



Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG), working with former EESI staffer Naomi Friedman, to develop its Regional Climate Change Initiative. Meghan conducted original research on regional sustainability/smart growth/climate change efforts that was shared with the U.S. EPA, the Board of Trade, and the Delaware Regional Planning Commission. Megan holds a degree in urban and regional planning from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Laura Parsons has been hired as EESI's Communications Coordinator. Leanne Lamusga, who had held this position, recently moved to Chicago. Laura joined EESI summer 2007 as an intern in the Sustainable Biomass and Energy

Program. Most recently, she has been working as an independent contractor on EESI's state low-carbon biofuel policy guidebook, which will be published in late summer. Laura previously worked for the Federal Aviation Administration and has a degree in mathematics.



## EESI Publications to the Rescue

Many readers send us comments about the tremendous value they find in EESI's e-newsletters. Take for example Josh Foster with the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research working at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. When he had to make a presentation on climate and transportation on short notice, he turned to *Climate Change News* for help, and sure enough, the current issue contained the information he needed on a recent relevant report.

In thanks he wrote,

*"all I can say is you rock! This is the single best source of climate information I get each week – bar none – and I use it to alert folks to stories and reports all over different parts of my network."*



After seeing *BCO: Bioenergy, Climate Protection, Oil Reduction* for the first time (it had been forwarded by a colleague), Tobie Mitchell, with Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Environmental Programs wrote,

*"I was impressed with the comprehensive selection of articles you assembled on the topic of bioenergy and climate change."*

The referring colleague wrote,

*"EESI is my favorite DC / national energy policy 'think tank.' Jetta Wong and her boss Carol Werner are accessible, and completely tuned into the national energy issues."*

## World Travelers and Advisors

EESI Senior Policy Associate Jetta Wong went to **Berlin, Germany** in December to give a presentation at an international conference entitled *Agrofuels: Opportunity or Danger? A Global Dialogue on U.S. and EU Agrofuels and Agriculture Policies and their Impacts on Rural Development in North and South*. In August 2007, Carol Werner went to **Brazil** to give a presentation at the *Biofuels and the Promise for Sustainable Energy* conference organized by Pace University.

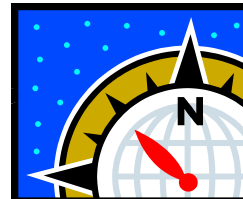
Recent website visitors have come from 115 different countries ranging from Australia to India and Germany to South



Africa. Staff also has met with and made presentations to delegations from many countries including **Indonesia, Sweden, Estonia, Brazil and Finland**.

## New Partners for Planning, Energy and Climate Change Project

Piggybacking on the New Partners for Smart Growth Conference in Washington, DC in February 2008, EESI and our partner – the American Planning Association (APA) – convened a meeting of people interested in our three-year project, *Planning and Climate Change: Mitigation and Clean Energy Strategies*. Planners have a real opportunity to effect change through their strategic position as advisors to policymakers in towns, cities, counties, and regions across the country. We had a lively discussion, which provided valuable input on how to help planners better integrate energy and climate change into their daily work. We continue to research and compile leading documents, publications, and other resources we are using to build a database of best practices, which will help guide planners as they address energy and climate issues in their work. We also briefly reviewed results from our second survey of planners' knowledge on the topic.



Just a few of the findings include:

- Awareness of energy issues is steadily increasing among planners.
- Climate change has become the top motivator for communities to address energy concerns, and citizen interest continues to be a major factor.
- The biggest obstacles to moving forward on energy planning actions continue to be a lack of political interest and the complexity of the issue.
- Planners know more about alternative energy topics and technologies than they did in 2005, but say additional education is needed.

Most communities have not yet integrated energy concerns into their zoning ordinances and development review procedures. The meeting was part of EESI's work to build a national network of planners and allied interests who are working to address energy and climate issues at the local and regional level (aka the *Planners Energy & Climate Network*). For more information on the survey results or other project-related information, go to <http://www.planning.org/energy>.

## Imaginative and Inspired - Creative EESI Supporters

Using [www.acleanfight.org](http://www.acleanfight.org), individuals are encouraging their friends and others to donate their tax refund to EESI or other charities. Couples are using the occasion of their marriage to raise money for EESI by registering their wedding with the "I Do Foundation" website and encouraging donations to us in lieu of wedding gifts or favors. Other EESI enthusiasts are using social



networking sites to share their passion about us and our cause with their friends. Still other donors have included EESI in their estates, donated stock, and used Groundspring.com to make a monthly pledge to EESI.

CommonThreadz.org, working with artist Matthew Curry, will use the proceeds from the sale of his original design, limited edition alternative energy t-shirt to provide a school uniform to an orphan or vulnerable child in a developing country and to benefit EESI. Go to [www.commonthreadz.org](http://www.commonthreadz.org) and click on "shop."



**How would you like to give?** For ideas on how you can help build a renewable energy future by supporting EESI, go to [www.eesi.org/support](http://www.eesi.org/support) or call Ruth at 202-628-1400.

*EESI Update* and EESI's other valuable work in energy, climate change, agriculture, transportation and smart growth are made possible through financial support from people like you. Your tax-deductible contribution will help EESI develop innovative policy solutions for a cleaner, safer, healthier world. EIN: 52-1268030. For more information, contact Ruth Lampi at [rlampi@eesi.org](mailto:rlampi@eesi.org) or 202-662-1887. For an electronic version of this newsletter, visit [www.eesi.org](http://www.eesi.org).

*The Environmental and Energy Study Institute is a non-profit organization established in 1984 by a bipartisan, bicameral group of members of Congress to provide timely information on energy and environmental policy issues to policymakers and stakeholders and develop innovative policy solutions that set us on a cleaner, more secure and sustainable energy path.*



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