



**EESI**

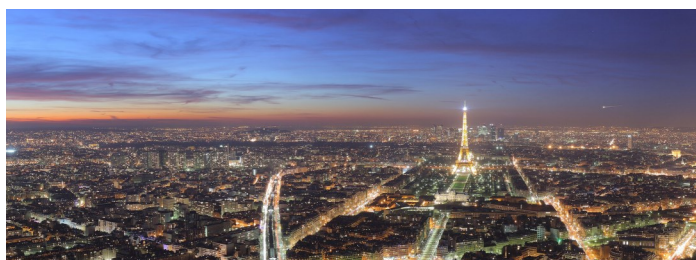
# EESI UPDATE

*A periodic update to friends of the Environmental and Energy Study Institute on our work in policymaker education, coalition building, and policy development.*

## 2015 Seminal Year in Transition to Clean Energy

### Paris Climate Talks May Be Game-Changer

Photo credit: Benh Lieu Song



**Good news!** This year is shaping up to be a seminal one in the transition to a clean energy world. On the international stage, the world's nations are unveiling plans to restrict their emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) before December's global climate talks in Paris. The United States, for instance, has committed to reducing its GHG emissions 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025. Fifty-six other countries have also formally submitted their GHG-reduction plans to the United Nations, including Canada, China, the members of the European Union, Japan, Mexico, and Russia. Perhaps most tellingly, China and India, respectively the world's first and fourth largest emitters of greenhouse gases, have announced that they are fully committed to the climate talks and want them to succeed.

On August 3, the Obama Administration unveiled its final Clean Power Plan, which addresses the nation's single largest source of greenhouse gases: existing coal plants, which supply about 40 percent of U.S. electricity. States will be given flexibility in how they reduce their emissions, including deploying energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies, or joining regional cap-and-trade programs.

You are doing your part as well! You're helping us track these developments with our weekly newsletter, *Climate Change News*, and showcase solutions with our briefings and publications on climate actions and resilience. Thanks to you, we organized a series of briefings on the Clean Power Plan (see the list of briefings on page 2), to show policymakers there are many compliance options available for states. Opponents focus on the Plan's costs, but the Plan also offers a huge opportunity for states to create jobs and save money over the long term. Energy efficiency, in particular, is a no-brainer. You're helping EESI expand its energy efficiency work, using on-bill financing (see page 2 for a detailed update). This is a way for cooperatives and municipal utilities to help their customers save money while also reducing emissions.

Carbon dioxide isn't the only pollutant we need to worry about, unfortunately. You are also helping EESI alert policymakers about the dangers of gasoline aromatics. These petrochemical compounds have replaced lead to provide octane in gasoline, and they comprise about 25 percent of every gallon of fuel in the United States. Troublingly, researchers are finding that the incomplete combustion of aromatics in engines creates ultra-fine particles that are dangerous to human health (see page 2 for more information).

As always, another key area of focus is clean, renewable energy. The 18th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Expo, which EESI helped organize on July 9, was a roaring success, with over 800 attendees and 38 speakers (including 7 Members of Congress and 6 Members of the Administration). You can see videos of the policy forums at [www.eesi.org/expo2015](http://www.eesi.org/expo2015).

And, we've pushed for investments in public transportation, which is in critical need of stable, long-term spending. With our partners at the American Public Transportation Association, your support was—and will be—critical in helping us show policymakers the urgent need to pass a new, six-year, transit-friendly Transportation Bill.

As you can see, there is reason for optimism, but there is still a lot of work to do! We hope we can continue to count on your support as, together, we advance sustainable solutions. □

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#### EESI REGRETS LOSS OF VIDEOGRAPHER AND DONOR

EESI's long-time videographer and friend, Max Gratzl, passed away peacefully in early August from cancer.



Max started recording EESI's briefings in 2009, and soon became much more than a trusted collaborator. Max was passionate about environmental issues: for him, working with EESI wasn't just a job, it was a calling. He regularly donated to EESI and wanted to spread the clean energy word as widely as possible. He was the first to suggest we livecast our briefings.

Max filmed and livecast EESI briefings until he was no longer physically able to—one month before his death.

## RECENT BRIEFINGS

### AUGUST

- On-Bill Financing: An Energy Efficiency Solution for Member-Owned Utilities in the Midwest

### JULY

- Innovative Clean Energy Strategies of Rural Electric Cooperatives
- What Action Is China Taking on Climate Change?
- 18th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO + Policy Forum

### JUNE

- Future Fuels: Can Biofuels Make Gasoline Cleaner, Cheaper?
- Can States Comply with the Clean Power Plan?

### MAY

- Economic Competitiveness: Transit's High-Value in the Knowledge Economy

### APRIL

- How Can the Federal Government Help Prepare Local Communities for Natural Disasters?
- EPA's Clean Power Plan: Will It Work and Will It Be Upheld?
- The Transportation Clock Is Ticking: Impacts, Risks, and Solutions
- What If the Water Can't Be Stopped? Tribal Resilience Plans in an Age of Sea Level Rise
- WIRES University: Electric Transmission - The Survey Course

### MARCH

- Find Out How Many Solar Jobs Were Created in Your State
- The "Bottom Line" on Investment Needs for Our Transportation System
- Making Buildings More Energy Efficient: The Building Technologies Office's 2016 Budget Request

**Materials and videos from our briefings are available at [www.eesi.org/briefings](http://www.eesi.org/briefings)**

## On-Bill Financing Making Inroads

### Utilities Across the Country Working with EESI

EESI is becoming a go-to resource for rural electric cooperatives (co-ops) and public power utilities (munis) seeking to help families cut their energy bills. Thanks to grants and support from individual donors, EESI has been able to work with co-ops and munis to establish "on-bill financing" programs: the utility or a partner organization pays for home energy upgrades and is then repaid through a monthly charge on the beneficiary's utility bill. If the program is well-designed, the home becomes much more energy efficient and the beneficiary ends up saving money every month. Co-ops and munis benefit by having more satisfied customers, and by being able to delay, or even avoid, the construction of new power plants.

In 2014, EESI expanded its on-bill financing initiative into a national effort, thanks to a three-year grant from The JPB Foundation. The time is ripe, as the Administration is encouraging states/utilities to pursue energy efficiency as a way of complying with the recently released Clean Power Plan.

EESI's extensive outreach and research are paying off. We've been making significant inroads in Michigan, having developed an excellent relationship with Michigan Saves, an energy efficiency non-profit. EESI is also engaged with utilities and other stakeholders in Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Tennessee, and other states as we lay the groundwork for additional on-bill financing initiatives. □

### EESI CHAIRMAN PRAISES MD ENERGY EFFICIENCY TARGETS IN WASHINGTON POST OP-ED

In an op-ed published by the *Washington Post* on September 6, EESI Board Chairman Jared Blum praised Maryland regulators for their decision to set one of the most ambitious energy-efficiency targets in the nation.

The state's electric utilities have been directed to keep cutting electricity usage by the equivalent of 2 percent of their retail sales every year, starting in 2020 at the latest.

Read the op-ed at <http://wapo.st/1QnVAfj>.

## Gasoline Aromatics: the New Lead?

After scientists found that toxic lead particles in engine exhaust were accumulating in bodies and affecting brain health, amendments to the *Clean Air Act* 25 years ago prohibited the use of lead in gasoline. Children were especially vulnerable, exhibiting lower IQ levels and more antisocial behaviors.

Lead was added to gasoline to raise its octane level, making it less prone to uncontrolled combustion (known as knocking), which can damage engines. Higher octane levels also allow for more fuel-efficient engine designs. With lead no longer an option, oil companies switched to gasoline aromatics to boost octane levels. Aromatics are a mixture of benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, and xylene, and now comprise 25 to 30 percent of the volume of gasoline.

Unfortunately, researchers are increasingly finding that gasoline aromatics are just as dangerous as lead. They contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone and of polycyclic

aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), a known neurotoxin. Ground-level ozone and PAHs have been linked to a multitude of health and developmental issues, including autism, ADHD, cardio-pulmonary effects, and cancers.

According to EPA calculations, 45 million Americans live, work, or attend school in close proximity to a major roadway, where they are exposed to the health risks of aromatics.

Despite the clear health benefits of doing so, oil companies are reluctant to dispense with aromatics, as they are effective at providing the higher octane levels needed to meet strict fuel economy standards. Biofuels are also an excellent source of octane, however, and they are cheaper and cleaner than aromatics. An EESI briefing, *Future Fuels: Can Biofuels Make Gasoline Cleaner, Cheaper?*, and fact sheet, *High Octane Fuels: Challenges & Opportunities*, highlighted the many benefits of switching to sustainable biofuel as an octane booster. □

## You Can Help Our Country Transition to Sustainable Energy!

### Donate

**POLICY** and policymaker education are key drivers for technology innovation, efficiency enhancements, and actions that foster sustainability. You are the key to making innovative environmental and energy solutions possible! EESI does not receive any Congressional appropriations, but depends on donors like you to help make this work possible. If you are reading this, you clearly care about energy efficiency and renewable energy, and you want win-win, sustainable solutions.

You can help our country transition to sustainable energy when you make a tax-deductible gift to EESI in the way that's right for you:

- **Online.** Make an online donation at [www.eesi.org/donate](http://www.eesi.org/donate)—make it easier on your budget by making it a **monthly recurring gift** and support sustainable energy all year long.
- **By Mail.** Mail your gift in the enclosed envelope. EESI, 1112 16th St, NW, Suite 300, Washington D.C. 20036
- **Double Your Impact with an Employer Match.** Ask your workplace if they match employee contributions.

- **Become an EESI Associate – or Renew Today.** EESI Associates are businesses, associations, family foundations, and individuals who are an important part of the EESI family. A gift of \$1,000, \$2,000, or more will make you an EESI Associate. EESI Associates show their commitment with general support, allowing EESI to put resources in the areas of greatest need—and of greatest opportunity.
- **At Work.** If your employer has a workplace giving program, you can donate through easy, paycheck-based deductions. Federal employees and members of the military can give to EESI by designating **CFC #10627**. Many other employers offer workplace giving. Ask your HR department!
- **Make a Gift of Stock.** You may be eligible for a tax deduction equal to the fair market value of appreciated stock donated to EESI. Contact 202-662-1887 for our brokerage information.



Thank you for putting your commitment to sustainable energy to work in so many ways – including as support for EESI! □

## EESI Remembers Board Member Jack Gibbons

EESI Board Member John "Jack" Gibbons, who had been President Bill Clinton's chief science and technology advisor and a leading authority on energy efficiency, passed away on July 17 at the age of 86. He is the only person to have ever served as the chief science advisor for both Congress (1979-1992) and the White House (1993-1998).



Courtesy: john.gibbons.org

Dr. Gibbons was a leading, and early, proponent of energy efficiency. He was convinced that technology could be used to reduce the impact of energy production and consumption on the environment, and he pioneered several studies on the question in the late 1960s—before the first oil shock made the need for energy conservation a given. In 1973, he became the first director of the Federal Office of Energy Conservation. He would later be awarded the Alliance to Save Energy's first "lifetime achievement in energy efficiency" prize in 2007.

Dr. Gibbons joined the Clinton administration in 1993, to serve as President Clinton's chief science and technology advisor. In that capacity, he coordinated the government's science and technology policy, and steadfastly defended federal research budgets. He was a member of the National Security Council, the Domestic Policy Council, and the National Economic Council. Former Vice President Al Gore, who worked closely with Dr. Gibbons during this time, said in a statement to Climate Progress, "It was Jack's optimism and imagination that did so much to help the United States face the difficult issues of our time, including the climate crisis. He was utterly unique and irreplaceable."

Dr. Gibbons served as an EESI Board Member from 2008 until his death. □

### RECENT EESI PUBLICATIONS

- Vehicle Efficiency and Emissions Standards
- Timeline of Progress Made in President Obama's Climate Action Plan
- High Octane Fuels: Challenges & Opportunities
- Polling the American Public on Climate Change (2015)
- White House Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience Recommended Actions
- Fact Sheet: Jobs in Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (2014)

*These publications can be found at: [www.eesi.org/pubs](http://www.eesi.org/pubs)*

## We Heard From You—Thanks !

EESI conducted a survey of its subscribers at the beginning of 2015 to help us better meet your needs as our audience and subscribers. Government staffers, who make up about 23 percent of EESI's subscriber base, represented 13.71 percent of the survey's respondents. According to one satisfied donor, "Not enough other organizations [are] directly educating Hill staff -- [this is] needed now more than ever."

We thank all of you who took the time to send in responses! We are grateful that large majorities of respondents found our briefings, white papers, and weekly *Climate Change News* newsletter useful (about 80 percent, 77 percent, and 70 percent respectively). Some of our offerings are not as familiar to our subscribers, however, including our web articles and our other weekly newsletter, *Sustainable Bioenergy, Farms, and Forests*. One respondent commented, "Every time I invest in attending your conferences in person, I feel like I gained 3 continuing education credits." Another respondent claimed, "EESI is one of the best environment and energy NGOs around with the best, most complete and relevant information." Thank you!

The survey also allowed us to better measure the impact of our work, with 57 percent of respondents saying they have taken action as a result of EESI materials. Respondents have used our fact sheets, issue briefs, newsletters, and briefings in their teaching materials, their book research, and their newsletters. EESI

materials have been used to brief Members of Congress, with one former Senate staffer, in particular, noting, "When I worked in a Senate office, I incorporated information from EESI discussions and publications into my policy briefings." As a result of EESI briefings and publications, several respondents also reported having reached out to their Congressional delegations or local representatives to raise awareness of important issues and environmentally-friendly solutions.

EESI strongly believes that it is critical for policymakers to be made aware of sustainable solutions that help preserve our environment without hindering economic growth, so we encourage the widespread dissemination of our materials (we simply ask to be properly credited!).

We are always eager to hear from our subscribers and supporters; please do not hesitate to contact us with feedback or questions at [eesi@eesi.org](mailto:eesi@eesi.org). □

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**2015 INTERNS**

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