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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

For immediate release:
January 15, 2009

Nicole Corcoran, Press Secretary
785.368.8500

The following is a column by Governor Kathleen Sebelius:

A comprehensive energy plan for Kansas

For Kansas to take the next step toward a clean energy future, we must have a clear picture of where we'd like to be. That's why my administration has worked with legislators, consumers and industry stakeholders to develop a vision for a comprehensive energy plan.

Recently, the Kansas Energy Council confirmed that we have adequate electricity to power us for years into the future. Meanwhile, this plan will help us bridge the gap until the day when clean coal technology is a reality, not just rhetoric.

Our plan is based on three priorities: promote the generation of clean, renewable energy; lead the way in energy efficiency efforts in state buildings; and create jobs and attract businesses in the new green economy.

The best way to move forward is a bipartisan effort, and we invite all legislators to endorse this clean energy initiative. Together, we can pass a legislative package which has already been endorsed by two of our major utilities, and includes net metering, new building codes, and statutory goals for renewable energy in Kansas. This will send a clear signal to investors and renewable manufacturers that Kansas is embracing a clean energy future.

My newly created GreenWorks Advisory Council will work to bring new green jobs to Kansas. Len Rodman, CEO of Black and Veatch, will lead this effort and I am grateful that he is providing his time and expertise.

We will continue to work to expand our wind power beyond the 1,000 megawatts of 2008 to reach our potential of 10,000 megawatts of wind power. The effort to accelerate a regional transmission grid to move power from the prairies to the market is an essential component of our plan.

Because the cleanest and cheapest energy is energy we don't use in the first place, I've directed the Kansas Corporation Commission to work with our utility companies to further extend our available power well into the future through measurable energy efficiency measures.

There is a major challenge facing America, and it provides us opportunities for a "made in America" energy program that is good for our economy; good for our national security; and good for our environment. Kansas is uniquely suited to be a leader in the green energy future.

Together, we can unlock the infinite potential of clean energy that will positively impact generations to come.

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