



KANSAS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Governor's Column: America's energy challenge is Kansas' opportunity

The following is a column by Governor Kathleen Sebelius:

Drive past any gas station and you can see the problem. America's security and its prosperity are chained to increasingly unstable sources of energy.

Our nation, our economy, and our very way of life are affected on a daily basis by events on the other side of the world that we're now linked to by a string of pipelines and supertankers. We'll continue to use fossil fuels in the future, but we need to develop alternatives that will reduce our dependency on them.

America's energy challenge is to break those chains, freeing ourselves from our dependence on foreign supplies of fossil fuels and charting a new path for our nation. Fortunately for Kansans, our nation's need to find renewable sources of energy presents new opportunities for our state.

In addition to our wind power potential, Kansas has a growing biofuels industry and we've made great strides recently to move up in the ethanol production rankings. We have several ethanol plants in construction right now and by January we'll have doubled our state's ethanol production in just the last four years.

I'm a fan of biofuels production because of the economic, security and environmental benefits, but renewable fuels also have the potential to create jobs in rural Kansas. We can see that at the ethanol plant in Liberal, which will have a \$2 million annual payroll and employ roughly 50 people.

Kansas also has the opportunity to be home to research into more efficient ways to produce biofuels. Kansas State University, for example, just last week announced it will be part of a U.S. Department of Agriculture research project into using grasses and plant waste for ethanol, instead of corn and sorghum.

Working together, we can make the most of all the opportunities before us.

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