

March 2, 2006 Thursday

TYPE: COMMITTEE HEARING

COMMITTEE: INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE: HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

HEADLINE: U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES H. TAYLOR (R-NC) HOLDS A HEARING ON FISCAL YEAR 2007 APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

SPEAKER:

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES H. TAYLOR (R-NC), CHAIRMAN

LOCATION: WASHINGTON, D.C.

WITNESSES:

STEPHEN JOHNSON, ADMINISTRATOR, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REP. NORMAN DICKS: One of my concerns is that the buildup of carbon dioxide and the warming of the planet is now proceeding so rapidly, that we're running out of time.

Jim Hansen, at NASA, who is broadly regarded as one of the leading government experts in the area, set off alarms last month when he suggested we are approaching the point of no return. He noted the Earth's temperature had risen by one full degree over the last 30 years and that a 4 percent increase would result in, and I quote, "changes that constitute practically a different planet."

We can't let this go another 10 years. We've got to do something. Is he wrong? Is this man, who is one of the great experts on this subject in this government, wrong?

JOHNSON: Well, as has been pointed out, there continues to be great debate on the issue of climate change. My focus, from an EPA perspective as administrator, is I can accept that climate change is occurring, whether it's naturally or manmade. For the manmade part, what is going to solve the problem? It's going to go technology, and that's what we're investing in.

And so to be able to see renewable fuels, if you used ethanol or biodiesel you actually get a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions as a nation. And so I'm very excited that we're moving, in part of the Renewable Fuel Standard, moving from 4 billion gallons a year to the year 2012 to 7.5 billion gallons. That's exciting, both from a renewable fuel energy security but also from a tank perspective, but from an environment perspective, greenhouse gases are significantly reduced.

March 9, 2006 Thursday

SECTION: CAPITOL HILL HEARING TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: SENATE ARMED SERVICES

HEADLINE: FISCAL 2007 BUDGET: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY-BY: MICHAEL W. HAGEE, COMMANDANT

AFFILIATION: UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

BODY: Statement of General Michael W. Hagee Commandant United States Marine Corps

Committee on Senate Armed Services

...Energy Efficiency in Transportation. The Marine Corps has exceeded the Energy Policy Act requirements for the past five years and has been a leader in the Department of Defense and among other Federal Agencies in the adoption of alternative fuels. Through use of **biodiesel** neighborhood electric vehicles, we have reduced petroleum use 20 percent from a 1999 baseline, and are expanding the deployment of hybrid vehicles in our garrison fleet. We are also supporting future use of hydrogen- powered fuel cell vehicles with the establishment of a refueling station aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California.

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March 9, 2006 Thursday

SECTION: BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL NEWS

ACC-NO: 20060309-DE-0309-Survey-respondents-favor-alternative-fuels

LENGTH: 254 words

HEADLINE: Survey respondents favor alternative fuels

BYLINE: Alejandro Bodipo-Memba, Detroit Free Press

Mar. 9--Most American voters think the country is facing an energy crisis and that government and private industry should invest billions of dollars to increase the role renewable fuels play in the nation's economy.

Those are the sentiments of a new survey of 1,000 registered voters commissioned by Energy Future Coalition, a nonpartisan public policy initiative in Washington, D.C. The study found:

- * 88% of respondents favor financial incentives such as tax breaks to encourage the use of renewable energy.
- * 92% of Americans support the adoption of minimum federal standards for the use of renewable energy by corporations.
- * 90% of survey participants support a national goal of having 25% of the nation's energy demand being met by renewable energy sources by the year 2025. Currently, the United States imports nearly 60% of the oil it uses annually.

Renewable fuels, such as ethanol and **biodiesel**, are liquid transportation fuels made from such crops as corn and soybeans. Other renewable or alternative sources include solar, wind, water and geothermal energy.

The study, conducted Feb. 12-15 and with a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points, also found that 80% of the respondents think energy issues are as important as national security and education.

The Associated Press State & Local Wire
March 9, 2006 Thursday 8:46 PM GMT

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

HEADLINE: Pawlenty declares state "strong, hopeful and prosperous"

BYLINE: By MARTIGA LOHN, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: ST. PAUL

Declaring the state "strong, hopeful and prosperous," Gov. Tim Pawlenty used his fourth State of the State address to tally his accomplishments and present modest proposals to better prepare students for a global economy.

"Our people are working. Our students are learning. And our citizens are healthy," said the governor, in his last such speech before he asks voters for a second term this November.

On Thursday, speaking to a House chamber packed with legislators, two former governors, Supreme Court justices and other dignitaries, Pawlenty promised more Chinese-language lessons in schools and a greater focus on science and math. He also looked back on the first three years of his term and what he called the biggest budget turnaround in state history.

In his first State of the State address, Minnesota faced a \$4.5 billion shortfall that the newly installed Republican governor described as the "Incredible Hulk of budget deficits." Back then, Pawlenty promised to reverse the red ink if leaders made tough fiscal decisions.

This year, the state is back in the black, with a modest \$181 million budget surplus, although more than half the amount is earmarked for schools under current law. Though some budget challenges remain, they're manageable compared with 2003's huge deficit.

DFL leaders and a coalition of labor and other groups quickly jumped on the message, saying Pawlenty can't claim to have balanced the budget without raising taxes because local property taxes and fees have shot up during his time in office, while more lack health insurance.

Other Democrats said there was little substance to back up Pawlenty's prose.

"He said lots of pleasing things, but so much of it is just rhetoric," said Sen. John Marty, DFL-Roseville. Seizing on Pawlenty's metaphor of Minnesota as a lighthouse a beacon of good government Marty turned it back on the governor, citing Pawlenty's embrace of a constitutional ban on gay marriage and proposed crackdown on illegal immigration.

"I agree with him, Minnesota should be a lighthouse for the world," Marty said. "But I think in many areas we're going in the opposite direction. The governor has blinders on."

But most state lawmakers, no matter the party, praised Pawlenty for his ability to deliver an uplifting, positive speech.

"It's hard not to agree with the governor's optimism and hope for the future," said

Rep. Paul Marquart, DFL-Dilworth.

Echoing President Bush's call to strengthen math and science education, Pawlenty promised to beef up algebra and chemistry requirements in public schools and he also wants to make Chinese language instruction materials widely available.

"Science and math are the currency of our new economy. We need more rigor in these areas," he said.

On China, he said: "If we want to further capitalize on the vastly growing Chinese market, more of us will need to speak their language."

Education Commissioner Alice Seagren said it could take a year or more to make the desired changes in algebra and chemistry. But she said the Chinese language curriculum could be quickly developed and introduced in interested school districts.

Pawlenty sharpened his focus on renewable fuels such as ethanol and **biodiesel** with a new goal: to get a quarter of the state's energy from renewable fuels by 2025. He also said he would require state employees to use E85 a fuel blend made up of 85 percent ethanol in flexible fuel vehicles already purchased by the state.

On health care, the governor said he wants to entice or even require uninsured people to get insurance. He offered \$12 million to help small medical providers start using electronic records and \$10 million to guard the state against bird flu.

The governor's message centered largely on Minnesota's economic future and the tax and spending policies it will take to keep the state strong. Social issues, like gay marriage and immigration, earned only a few paragraphs.

Of the proposal to add a gay marriage ban to the state constitution and the one to combat illegal immigration, Pawlenty urged lawmakers to confront them head-on.

"We shouldn't be afraid of rational and robust debates about these issues," he said. "This building was built for just such debates and the foundations and the walls are strong."

Pawlenty touched on the sacrifices of military members, drawing a standing ovation.

Gesturing toward the audience, he recognized Merrilee and Daniel Carlson, the parents of Sgt. Michael Carlson, the first St. Paul soldier to die in Iraq as well as Sen. Becky Lourey, whose son Matthew, a helicopter pilot, was also killed there last year.

Lourey is one of several Democrats running for governor. Pawlenty hasn't officially declared that he's running for re-election but all indications are that he will.

The governor said he plans to visit Camp Shelby in Mississippi on Wednesday to send off 2,600 Minnesota soldiers deploying to Iraq. At his prompting, the audience turned, applauding and cheering, to a camera carrying the speech on the Internet that Pawlenty said was being watched by some of those soldiers.

Patrick Condon contributed to this report.

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March 9, 2006 Thursday

SECTION: SPOTLIGHT Vol. 10 No. 9

HEADLINE: ALTERNATIVE FUELS: Judge finds DOE in violation of law aimed at ramping up use of non-oil vehicles

The Bush administration is violating a 1992 law aimed at increasing the country's use of alternative fuel vehicles, a federal judge ruled this week. The Energy Department did not follow a requirement to set long-range goals for converting a percentage of the nation's cars and light trucks to natural gas, ethanol, hydrogen and other nonpetroleum fuels, said Judge William Alsup of U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. Alsup ordered the agency to revise the law's petroleum reduction goal to an achievable number and then decide whether to impose purchasing requirements on the fleets.

DOE spokeswoman Anne Kolton said yesterday the department had no comment since litigation is ongoing. Two environmental groups sued the Bush administration last year for failing to comply with the law (AP/San Francisco Chronicle online, March 8). The 1992 Energy Policy Act requires that 75 percent of the new vehicles purchased by federal agencies run on alternative fuels. Since the Center for Biological Diversity and Bluewater Network sued 14 federal agencies last year, nine agencies have taken action to meet the law's requirements. The CIA has not reported its vehicles purchases

(Greenwire, Dec. 1, 2005). Indiana to help fund world's largest **biodiesel** plant
Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels (R) announced yesterday the state would extend \$6 million to \$7 million in tax credits and other incentives to French agribusiness giant Louis Dreyfus Corp. to build the world's largest **biodiesel** plant near Claypool, Ind. The project combines a soybean processing plant with a **biodiesel** production plant and will crush nearly 50 million bushels of soybeans per year, producing more than 1 million tons of soybean meal for animal feed and 80 million gallons of **biodiesel**. "There's going to be a lot coming on, but we believe the demand will be there for it," Anderson said. "That's why we want to be investing and investing large, early" (Maureen Groppe, Indianapolis Star, March 9). -- LK

Resource News International

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March 9, 2006 Thursday 3:16 PM Eastern Time

HEADLINE: Manitoba Provides Incentives To Spur **Biodiesel** Production

DATELINE: Winnipeg, MB

In an effort to encourage **biodiesel** production, the Manitoba Government announced Thursday it has eliminated all provincial taxes on Manitoba-produced pure **biodiesel**.

Manitoba's Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Minister, Rosann Wowchuck and Energy, Science and Technology Minister, Dave Chomiak announced that the province will no longer collect road and provincial sales tax on pure **biodiesel** that meets the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) fuel-quality standard.

Chomiak said this initiative expands November's **biodiesel** action plan which is "designed to make **biodiesel** part of Manitoba's clean energy plan along with hydro, wind, ethanol and geothermal."

The elimination of these taxes provides an 11.5-cent-per-litre advantage over regular diesel and is in addition to the four-cent-per-litre tax break offered by the federal government. This amount is more than twice the 5.5-cent-per-litre **biodiesel** tax advantage announced in November. The tax advantage applies to the biofuel (ASTM) portion of **biodiesel** blends. This incentive will remain in place for five years to give the industry time to grow.

Progress on the action plan includes the release of a new C\$1.5 million support program for **biodiesel** production in Manitoba, the appointment of an independent **biodiesel** board provide recommendations to the government, and the establishment of the **biodiesel** office to coordinate governmental activities and provide the public with information on **biodiesel**.

Elements of the action plan currently under development include:

- establishing a Manitoba-based **biodiesel** fuel-quality testing centre;
- developing a preference policy for Manitoba Transportation and Government Services for use of **biodiesel** in its fleet vehicles;
- studying the feasibility of using specified risk materials (SRMs), livestock remains restricted due to BSE, for **biodiesel**; and
- working with private-sector fleet managers to encourage **biodiesel** usage.

Biodiesel fuel is made from vegetable oils, animal fats and/or waste restaurant grease.