



Massachusetts State Leaders Announce Aggressive Biofuels Plan

Top Policymakers Release Report Prepared by Northeast Biofuels Collaborative As Part of Initiative

For Immediate Release

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November 5, 2007 - Top legislative and administration officials in Massachusetts announced a plan today to make the state a leader in the development and use of advanced biofuels. At the press conference, Governor Deval Patrick, Senate President Therese Murray, House Speaker Sal DiMasi, and U.S. Congressman Bill Delahunt jointly filed state biofuels legislation designed to spark the nascent industry, and announced the creation of a MA Biofuels Task Force.

A report prepared by the Northeast Biofuels Collaborative for Congressman Delahunt served as the framework of the agreement, and will be used by state officials as a blueprint for moving forward.

“The demand for oil could push us beyond a tipping point from both an environmental and economic perspective,” said Congressman Delahunt. “With biofuels, we can reduce our dependence on foreign oil while stabilizing energy costs and creating enormous economic opportunity in the state.” Delahunt cited the \$10 billion spent on oil every year by Massachusetts’ taxpayers, and the direct costs of the Iraq War to Americans of \$3 billion per week. “Our unique concentration of intellectual, natural and venture capital puts the northeast at a distinct advantage to lead us away from this energy crisis,” Delahunt added.

Specifically, policy makers will advance legislation requiring the use of biodiesel in all blends of transportation and heating fuels, starting at 2% biodiesel in 2010 and increasing to 5% biodiesel in 2013. The state will also eliminate the gasoline excise tax on cellulosic ethanol. A MA Biofuels Task Force will design and submit recommendations for a more comprehensive biofuels program by March 31, 2008.

“States have to be both pragmatic and visionary when it comes to promoting biofuels and reducing their dependence on foreign oil,” said Brooke Coleman, Founder of the Northeast Biofuels Collaborative and Executive Director of the New Fuels Alliance. “Like building a house, the industry needs a concrete foundation on which to stabilize a more sophisticated structure.”

Coleman said the Task Force will consider a wide range of policies, including energy crop incentives, tax credits for advanced biofuels research and development, fuel performance

standards such as a Renewable or Low Carbon Fuels Standards, and requirements to produce flex-fuel vehicles. Roughly 1% of vehicles registered in the state are flex-fuel.

The report, entitled *A Proposed Strategy To Promote Biofuels Production and Use in Massachusetts*, notes that the Commonwealth spends as much on petroleum every year as natural gas and electricity combined. However, since Massachusetts does not produce or refine oil and has very limited petroleum storage, it is more susceptible than any other U.S. region to fuel shortages and pump price spikes, as experienced after Hurricane Katrina. The document also notes that Massachusetts is the third largest heating oil market in the U.S. and that businesses and residents pay the third highest energy prices in the nation.

The report calls on Massachusetts to immediately pursue a set of Early Action Measures, while establishing a Biofuels Task Force to design a more comprehensive biofuels program. The legislation filed today includes many of the report's recommendations, and will rely on the Task Force approach delineated by the Northeast Biofuels Collaborative and Congressman Delahunt.

The Northeast Biofuels Collaborative is a nonprofit coalition based in Boston dedicated to advancing sensible policies to promote the use of biofuels in the northeast region. The Collaborative is an affiliate of the New Fuels Alliance, which works closely with elected officials, regulators, and other stakeholders on the east and west coasts. The group includes most of the major biofuel companies in Massachusetts, including Agrivida, BioEnergy International, Mascoma, SunEthanol, and Verenum.

The MA Biofuels Report is available at www.nebiofuels.org.

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