

# PRESS RELEASE

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## North American Water Office / C-BED

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## GETTING ENERGY RIGHT

Minnesota took a huge step toward responsible energy management this legislative session with the passage late Sunday (May 20, 2007) of the “Next Generation Energy Act of 2007.” This legislation was signed into law this afternoon by Governor Pawlenty.

The Next Generation Energy Act contains many excellent provisions that will improve conservation and increase our ability to address global climate change. But the most important contribution it makes is that it enables a ***lot more*** Community-Based Energy Development (C-BED) to come on-line quickly, throughout Minnesota. C-BED creates opportunities for ordinary Minnesota citizens to participate directly in the economic benefits associated with developing the renewable energy we need for environmental protection. C-BED allows our energy dollars, which amount to about \$6 billion per year just for electricity in Minnesota, to increasingly circulate throughout the Minnesota economy instead of leaving the state in service of some distant corporate agenda.

“C-BED guides us toward economic democracy,” said George Crocker, Executive Director of the North American Water Office. “C-BED allows us to create good-paying jobs in our rural communities, and to use our energy dollars to generate the tax revenues we need to educate our children and care for our elderly citizens while we produce the clean energy we need to protect against acid rain, global warming, mercury contamination, and other environmental degradation” he continued.

“This legislation removes many barriers that make community-based energy development difficult,” said Dan Juhl who has been the guiding force behind community-based energy development for years. Dan Juhl added, “This C-BED Initiative will also identify opportunities for C-BED projects to save ratepayers tons of money, because now we can be much smarter about how we develop the new powerlines we need to deliver renewable energy to energy consumers.”

The legislation provides the Minnesota Department of Commerce with better tools for measuring the contribution of C-BED projects to local economies and to the economic health of Minnesota, and it opens up C-BED to all renewable energy resources, not just wind. It allows C-BED projects to negotiate contracts with the electric utilities who purchase C-BED energy, that protect consumers while ensuring that the projects are financially viable. With this legislation, Minnesota-based electric utilities can form partnerships with C-BED Qualifying Owners to do projects that bring financial and political benefits to all parties. Municipal and Cooperative Power Companies can now join the C-BED family, and do projects that benefit their local Coop and Municipal members.

The new legislation also directs electric utilities to work with C-BED and other stakeholders to identify where distributed and dispersed renewable energy generation facilities can be located throughout Minnesota, in a way that optimizes the efficient use of the existing powerline grid, and then expands our existing grid strategically to accommodate the next sets of C-BED projects. This strategic enhancement of the transmission system promises tremendous savings to electricity ratepayers, while creating major opportunities for ordinary Minnesota citizens to make money by being directly involved with the renewable energy commitments made by our Minnesota Legislature during this legislative session.

“We would like very much to thank Governor Pawlenty, Minnesota Senators and Legislators, and the Minnesota Department of Commerce for their strong leadership for C-BED,” said Dan Jul and George Crocker. “This leadership, and the willingness of our local Minnesota-based power companies to work with us to bring this legislation forward successfully, promises a bright, clean and prosperous energy future for Minnesota. We’re finally getting energy right!” they concluded.

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