

Watt's Up

A View of the Electric Utility Industry



SENATORS DELUGED IN CLIMATE FLY-IN

New Draft Has Steeper Cuts in CO²

Wisconsin electric cooperative members have contributed more than 17,000 of some 520,000 postcards generated thus far in a grassroots campaign to focus the U.S. Senate on electricity prices and reliability when it takes up climate legislation this fall.

Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) Manager Share Brandt carried thousands of those postcards in a suitcase when she traveled to Washington, D.C., to join the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) fly-in Monday, September 28 to demonstrate Wisconsin co-op members' concerns to Senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold.

Co-op representatives from a total of 25 states participated in the events, part of the Our Energy, Our Future campaign.

NRECA CEO Glenn English characterized the postcard response as "overwhelming," saying, "Boxes on top of boxes on top of boxes of signed postcards - that is what a genuine grassroots campaign looks like."

Meanwhile, an initial draft of the Senate climate

legislation obtained by Energy and Environment News is reportedly similar to the Waxman-Markey bill that passed the House of Representatives at the end of June, except for one thing: faster mandated cuts in carbon dioxide emissions.

A California-Massachusetts product like Waxman-Markey, the draft produced by Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and John Kerry (D-MA) will differ in other details, but the first notable difference is its 20-percent cut in emissions by 2020, compared with Waxman-Markey's 17 percent.

Measured against a 2005 base year, Boxer-Kerry's mandated cuts post-2020 would follow the same path as Waxman-Markey: 42 percent by 2030 and 83 percent by 2050.

Numbers showing how emissions allowances would be distributed across the U.S. economy are not part of the early draft, but are expected to be revealed later this month when Boxer brings the bill before her Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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It's Not Too Late To Make Your Voice Heard

The fight is not over. Postcards are still being sent to Senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold. Anyone who is concerned about how a climate change bill will affect the cost of power can and should send a postcard. You don't have to be a co-op member.

Postcards simply state that you are asking the Senate to work with electric cooperatives as climate change and energy legislation is drafted to minimize costs and to fight for a bill that is fair, affordable and achievable.

Call Oconto Electric and ask for one postcard for each Senator or for as many postcards as you can get filled out by your friends and family. Return them to OEC and we will send them to the Senators for you.

**Call OEC at 1-800-472-8410
for your postcards.**



Wind Siting Clears Legislature

As of the end of September, legislation directing the Public Service Commission to develop uniform statewide standards for siting wind-energy projects had passed both houses of the Wisconsin Legislature and awaited Governor Doyle's signature.

Reflecting strong, bipartisan majorities, votes in the two houses came after more than two years of discussion characterized by crowded and lengthy public hearings.

Once finalized, administrative rules to be developed by the commis-

sion will end the ability of counties and local municipalities to create their own unique standards for wind projects with less than 100 megawatts capacity - an authority wind developers and advocates say has been used to impose overly restrictive conditions.

For projects with capacities greater than 100 megawatts, PSC jurisdiction already supersedes local authority under current law. ■

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Kanack Receives Cooperative Builder Award

Dan Kanack of rural Lena has been awarded the prestigious Cooperative Builder Award by the Cooperative Network, a statewide organization serving 600 member-cooperatives in Wisconsin and Minnesota. The Cooperative Builder Award honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions at the local, state, and/or national level to advance cooperative philosophy and ideals. Kanack was nominated for this award by Byron C. Nolde on behalf of Oconto Electric Cooperative.

Elected to Oconto Electric's board of directors in 1975, Dan has held officer positions of Secretary and President. In 1979 he was also elected to the board of the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) where he served until 1996 and served as the Wisconsin representative on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association board for eight years. On the WECA board he held officer

positions of Secretary, Vice-President and President.

In September 1983, Dan put his life on hold for three weeks while he traveled to Monteagudo, Bolivia, through the Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance. Monteagudo



Dan Kanack

was a city of 7,000 people who lived with dirt floors, no windows, often no doors - and mostly without electricity. Not knowing what would be expected of him while he was there, he ended up being the liaison between Bolivia and Oconto Electric's engineer to get them some much needed engineering assistance so they could build lines and bring power to more parts of the city.

"It was exciting, rewarding and at times overwhelming," Kanack said of the experience, noting it was the warmth of the people he worked with that provided him the greatest reward.

Oconto Electric Cooperative has grown as a utility and as a part of the communities they serve under the leadership of Dan Kanack. Byron Nolde, CEO of Oconto Electric states, "We are proud of Dan's accomplishments and hope he is around for a long time to continue to help guide Oconto Electric Cooperative into the future." ■

Cooling Temps Prompting Media Thaw

Members of Congress might pass the bills, but when it comes to promoting legislation to regulate Earth's climate, no senator or representative comes close to matching the energy expended by the media, both here and abroad.

So it's not to be lightly dismissed when major media on both sides of the Atlantic start publishing stories designed to show they were right all along—whatever happens.

Friday, October 9, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), a leading proponent of human-induced global warming, headlined a story, "What happened to global warming?" The second paragraph acknowledged something that would have been very hard to learn from past BBC coverage, namely, "For the last 11 years we have not observed any increase in global temperatures."



Two days earlier, U.S. News and World Report published a story about a noted geologist visiting Capitol Hill offices. A former believer in carbon dioxide driving climate change, he has changed his mind based on what U.S. News called "a mountain of studies and scientific evidence that suggest CO₂ is not the cause for warming."

"On Monday, October 12, London's Daily Mail said global warming fears "face being debunked" by data from ship's logs kept by Captain James Cook and Charles Darwin, noteworthy in that the paper reversed custom by spinning the headline so the warming theory would

appear weaker than the story itself suggested.

Wednesday, a Mail headline asked, "Whatever happened to global warming? How freezing temperatures are starting to shatter climate change theory." Ten paragraphs down, it dropped the bomb: "Indeed, some experts believe we should forget global warming and turn our attention to an entirely different phenomenon—global cooling."

The BBC story closed with a statement that until very recently would have been almost unimaginable from a major media source, saying the debate about what might cause global warming "is far from over."

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CO₂ Lawsuit Revived

Litigation dating to Peg Lautenschlager's tenure as Wisconsin Attorney General got a new lease on life a few weeks ago, as the U.S. 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals in New York reversed a lower court judge who ruled almost exactly four years earlier that limiting carbon dioxide emissions was a question for legislative bodies, not courts, to decide.

Lautenschlager and the attorneys general of seven other states sued a group of utilities, including Xcel Energy, demanding that the courts order them to cut carbon dioxide emissions 3 percent annually for 10 years.

On September 16, 2005, District Judge Loretta Preska dismissed the suit, suggesting the plaintiffs were trying to make law by means of lawsuit and writing that the issues raised were "transcendently legislative".

Late in September 2009, the appeals court said Preska was wrong. As quoted by the Associated Press, the decision effectively said the problem Preska identified can't occur. The two-judge panel wrote, "Given the checks and balances among the three branches of our government, the judiciary can no more usurp executive and legislative prerogatives than it can decline to decide matters within its jurisdiction simply because such matters may have political ramifications."

The reversal allows the plaintiffs to pursue their litigation, potentially affecting power plant operations in 20 states.

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"Bag Lunch to Go" at OEC



Friday, October 30

purchase a bag lunch from Oconto Electric.

For only \$6 you get:

**warm turkey sandwich with BBQ sauce
bag of chips, cookie, an apple and either a
soda or bottle of water or
you can purchase a sandwich only for \$3.**



**FREE DELIVERY IN CITY OF
OCONTO FALLS**

**Call 846-2816 by 9 AM on Oct 30th to schedule
delivery of your Bag Lunch To Go or just stop and
pick up lunch from OEC between 11 AM - 1 PM.**

**All proceeds from "Bag Lunch To Go" will be donated
to Home Respite Care of Oconto County**

About This Publication...

If you don't want to receive the Watt's Up quarterly publication, or if you know someone who **would** like to receive it, please call Pam Langlay at Oconto Electric Cooperative, 800-472-8410 or email Pam at planglay@ocontoelectric.com.

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