

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 26, 2010

The Honorable Byron Dorgan
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Bennett
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Dorgan and Ranking Member Bennett:

We are writing to request that you continue to robustly support the renewable energy research and development programs at the Department of Energy (DOE). Research and development funding for these technologies is helping create jobs and keep America competitive in the race to be *the* global clean energy leader. We are very grateful for your past support of these programs and respectfully request that you continue strong funding levels in the Fiscal Year 2011 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill.

Renewable energy offers tremendous promise as a way to address some of our most pressing energy challenges. By providing a clean, home-grown, emissions-free source of electricity, renewable technologies bolster our economy, improve energy security and reliability, and avoid emissions of greenhouse gases and noxious air pollutants.

Though clean energy has recently been given historic boosts in legislation like the Recovery Act, there is still substantial need to fully realize growth potential and make the transition to a clean energy economy. As other countries make significant investments in clean energy, the United States must not miss this opportunity to stay competitive.

The **Solar Energy Program** has established a target of making solar power cost-competitive with conventional fuels across all market sectors by 2015. Under this scenario, solar would provide hundreds of thousands of high-tech jobs throughout the U.S. However, the current soaring growth of the industry in Germany, Japan, and China means the United States must make substantial investments if it is to reclaim technology leadership in this critical sector. We were encouraged to see that the President's FY 2011 budget request included an increase in funding for solar energy by 34% over last year's budget. However, this area merits significant increased investment. We urge you to fund the Solar Energy Program at \$337 million in FY 2011, with an additional \$10 million for solar heating and cooling within the Building Technologies Program.

The **Geothermal Technologies Program (GTP)** seeks to expand the use of geothermal resources and develop advanced technologies to effectively tap this resource throughout the nation. While the U.S. Geological Survey estimates that US geothermal resources have the potential to produce between 39,000 and 89,000 megawatts of additional electricity using readily available conventional geothermal power technologies, most of these resources remain untapped. Therefore, we believe it is critical that a strong investment also be made for exploration

activities, under a cost-share program with industry. We urge you to fund the GTP at \$105 million, with the increase over the Administration's request going towards cost-share exploration programs.

The **Hydropower Technologies Program** supports hydropower resource assessments and environmental impact studies, research development, and demonstration (RD&D) of new waterpower technologies, and RD&D funding for conventional hydropower project technologies, primarily for the advanced hydropower turbine program. We urge you to fund the Hydropower Technologies Program at \$100 million in FY 2011.

The **Ocean/Marine Renewable Technologies Program** helps to support the development of ocean energy technologies that are on the verge of commercial viability. Separate from the Hydro Technologies Program, these funds would help accelerate basic and applied technology research and development and demonstration projects for technologies such as tidal, wave, and current energy. We urge you to provide \$100 million for the Ocean/Marine Renewable Technologies Program.

The **Wind Energy Technologies Program** supports wind energy research and development at the national, state, and local levels. The President's FY 2011 budget requests wind R&D investments of \$122.5 million. While this is a healthy increase of 63% over the previous year, more support should be given to this growing industry. This increased funding request recognizes the strong contribution that wind energy is making – and can make – to producing clean energy, new jobs, and significant reductions in global warming pollution. We urge you to fund the Wind Energy Technologies Program at \$170.5 million. This would include \$5.5 million for small wind turbines, \$38 million for cost reduction and reliability increase, and \$4 million for technical assistance for community wind projects. We urge you to include an additional \$16 million through the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability for power system integration, and transmission research and planning.

These programs represent critical investments for our nation's energy future, and we respectfully urge you to fund them at robust levels. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

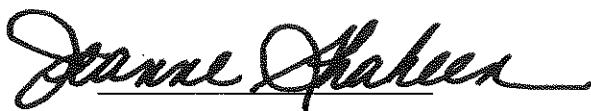
Sincerely,



Robert M. Anderson



Jon Lisk



Darne Shaker



Steve Linn

Jamil K. Shaka

Ron Wyden

Jeffrey A. Merkley

Robert W. Benn

Ben Cardin

Mark Begich

Ted Kamin

3/26/10—Letter supporting FY11 funding for Renewable Energy Research & Development programs

1. Senator Robert Menendez
2. Senator Joseph Lieberman
3. Senator Jeanne Shaheen
4. Senator Ron Wyden
5. Senator Roland Burris
6. Senator Daniel Akaka
7. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse
8. Senator Mark Begich
9. Senator Jeff Merkley
10. Senator Benjamin Cardin
11. Senator Ted Kaufman