



American Clean Energy & Security Act – An Opportunity to Lead Again

By Steve Melink

As a business owner working in the energy sector, I support the American Clean Energy & Security Act for three reasons:

1. National Security. We need to reduce our dependency on foreign oil and stop doing business with petro-dictators. We are still fighting a war in **Iraq** at least partly for the region's strategic assets. Last year our President had to ask **Saudi Arabia** to increase oil production and reduce our gas prices. This winter **Russia** shut down its natural gas pipeline to Eastern Europe to leverage its clout. And we continue to receive threats from tyrants in **Iran** and **Venezuela**. Energy independence will make America strong, our enemies weak, and the world safe.
2. Economic Growth. We need to invest in clean energy to propel our economy in the 21st century. The next wave of opportunity is in the fast-growth **solar, wind, nuclear, clean-coal, biomass, fuel cell**, and **battery** industries. At stake are not only thousands of new jobs but our ability to serve as a beacon of freedom/democracy in the world. Also businesses will be incentivized to become more energy-efficient and thereby become *more* competitive and sustainable. We must not cede to Japan, China, and Germany who are investing heavily in clean energy.
3. Environmental Health. We need to serve as a world leader in protecting the planet and all its **biodiversity** and **richness**. Otherwise future generations will inherit a totally different world. Every day the U.S. burns hundreds of trainloads of coal and billions of gallons of gasoline/diesel. The cumulative effect of this pollution is starting to be understood. Having been to China, I hope we never take our natural environment (**blue skies, green trees, clean lakes/rivers**) for granted. It would make the above security and economy arguments a moot point.

The oil/coal lobbyists call this bill a job killer and energy tax. But I believe it will improve our security, economy, and quality of life.