Gov. Rick Perry’s Remarks Regarding Wind Energy

*Note - Gov. Perry frequently departs from prepared remarks.

Friday, September 29, 2006

Thank you Dean (Dean Orsak, SMU Engineering). I am delighted to be on the SMU campus in this state-of-the-art engineering building that is clean and green.

This is a landmark day as the State of Texas partners with private industry to make an historic investment of more than $10 billion in new wind energy infrastructure that will diversify our energy production, clean up our air, and help Texas surpass our renewable energy goals. When I say we are partnering with the private sector, I mean it in the best sense of the word: private companies are putting up all the money instead of taxpayers, and the State of Texas will ensure we build the transmission capacity needed to deliver this zero-emission power source to Texans’ homes. For every 1000 megawatts generated by new wind sources, we will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by six million tons over the next 20 years.

Let me talk about the source of this power for a moment. Texas is blessed with an abundant supply of wind energy, and that’s not even counting all the hot air my opponents’ have been generating. West Texas and the gulf coast are a fertile source of wind energy. And the great thing about wind energy is that the costs are very small once you have paid for putting the turbine in the ground. Unlike oil, you don’t run out at a certain location over time. As the companies with me today invest billions of dollars in wind energy infrastructure, the Public Utility Commission is committed to building the transmission lines needed over the next few years to capture this green power and get it to the market. Wind energy infrastructure is also less disruptive to landowners because it allows for concurrent use. In other words, putting up a wind turbine doesn’t stop a rancher from grazing cattle.

I am proud of our state’s commitment to renewable energy production. We are on the leading edge of developing renewable sources of energy and a more diversified energy economy which is key to keeping costs down. Earlier this summer Texas surpassed California as the nation’s leader in wind generation capacity. We have spent more than $300 million on clean technologies as part of the TERP program, reducing nitrogen oxide emissions by 75,000 tons. And we are a finalist for the world’s first near-zero emissions coal power plant. This announcement also bodes well for the growth of the Texas economy. Over the last three years we have added 650,000 jobs, transformed a record budget deficit into a record budget surplus, and attracted more business

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expansions and relocations than any state in the nation. With this $10 billion announcement, the economic ripple will be more like a tidal wave as these companies pour millions of dollars into wages and salaries for Texas workers.

Today's announcement is an important chapter in our continuing commitment to cleaning our air and diversifying our energy supply. In fact, this cheaper form of energy could reduce energy costs by as much as $5 billion over the next ten years as we reduce our dependence on natural gas. This is a monumental investment that will make our air cleaner and our people healthier. To discuss this commitment further is the chairman of the PUC, Paul Hudson.