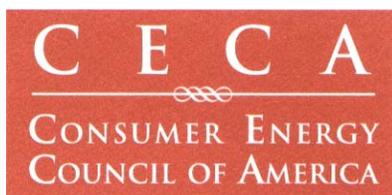


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## **NATION'S ENERGY EXPERTS PROPOSE A COMPREHENSIVE, AGGRESSIVE ENERGY POLICY TO BENEFIT NATION'S CONSUMERS**

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WASHINGTON, D.C. May 17, 2006 – The Consumer Energy Council of America (CECA), one of the nation's leading public policy organizations, today released sweeping recommendations that benefit American consumers and provide policymakers with an innovative energy strategy to optimize the use of fuels over the next 20 years. The recommendations, calling for action on climate change, support for the expansion of nuclear power, deployment of clean coal and other breakthrough technologies, and increased use of energy efficiency and renewable energy, are among the findings of a new report, *Fueling the Future: Better Ways to Use America's Fuel Option*. The report is the result of the CECA Fuels and Technologies Forum, a blue-ribbon panel of energy experts.

The report notes that the energy needed to heat homes and businesses, to fuel the industrial sector, and to power daily lives of consumers is projected to increase by 30 percent by 2025. The Honorable J. Bennett Johnston, Chairman of the CECA Forum and former Chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said today, "What CECA has accomplished in this Forum is remarkable. In particular, it is remarkable that a prominent national forum with a consumer focus has developed far-reaching recommendations on the need for clean coal and nuclear energy to meet the nation's stationary energy demands in environmentally responsible ways."

The CECA Forum's panel of experts, representing Federal and State regulators, industry leaders, consumer advocates, and environmental leaders, recognized that no one fuel can answer the nation's energy needs over the next 20 years. To accomplish this challenge, CECA calls for: (1) the deployment of clean energy technologies – including clean coal, nuclear energy, renewables, and energy efficiency -- to meet the nation's environmental and energy goals; (2) removal of barriers to more efficient uses of energy; and (3) investment in infrastructure and workforce requirements of the nation's energy systems.

The CECA Forum concluded that the current portfolio of fuels must be utilized in more effective ways to maximize benefits of fuels, minimize impacts, and meet the increasing demands of consumers for energy services. CECA recommends the development and commercialization of advanced clean coal technologies. CECA recommends that nuclear energy play a prominent role in the nation's fuels portfolio to provide consumers with baseload sources of energy that do not emit greenhouse gases or other criteria pollutants. CECA is the first consumer organization in the United States to advocate the expansion of nuclear power and to address options to overcome barriers to greater use of nuclear power.

Additionally, CECA recommends that innovative, cost effective incentives be provided for the deployment of renewable technologies so that these technologies become more competitive in the near term. CECA recommends greater use of energy efficiency measures across the spectrum of the residential, governmental, commercial, and industrial sectors to reduce the nation's demand for energy supplies, enhance national security, reduce global and local environmental impacts of energy production and consumption, and decrease the overall cost of energy.

"Tackling our long-term energy needs requires action now. Failure to take action will result in higher costs in the future, relocation of domestic industries abroad, loss of jobs, and rising energy prices which will impact consumers' lives. CECA's plan proposes improved use of fuels so that society's values of environmental stewardship, assured availability, reliability, and security are not compromised," said Ellen Berman, CECA's President. "CECA calls on policymakers to use the findings and recommendations in *Fueling the Future* as a roadmap for fuels policy. Meeting the projected increase in demand in ways that benefit consumers requires the urgency of an Apollo Program commitment to clean energy development."

The CECA Forum was unique in developing a set of National Consumer Priorities as the prism through which its analysis was conducted and the recommendations were developed. Those priorities include: (1) environmental protection; (2) affordable and predictable energy services; (3) sustainable economic development; (4) reliable and high quality energy services; (5) public safety; and (6) system security.

The CECA Forum limited its examination to strategies for meeting stationary energy needs, but recognized that addressing transportation fuels is equally important. CECA conducted extensive analyses on costs and benefits of coal, natural gas, and oil; nuclear energy; renewable energy resources and energy efficiency, and examined regulatory drivers and conventional and breakthrough technologies of each fuel within the context of the National Consumer Priorities. The CECA Forum also addressed the impacts of climate change on future fuels policy.

Included among the 34 findings and recommendations of the CECA Forum are the following:

- Coal is an abundant resource in the U.S and represents 54 percent of electric generation. Clean coal technologies, such as Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC), should be promoted. Incentives provided by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 should be fully supported. Clean coal technologies will enable coal to meet one of the most important of the National Consumer Priorities – that of environmental responsibility.
- Nuclear energy currently provides 21 percent of electricity generation. Because the operation of nuclear power plants emits no greenhouse gases, CECA supports the design, licensing, and construction of additional safe, nuclear power plants utilizing advances in power plant design. Congress should fully fund provisions in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to accelerate expansion of nuclear energy, and options for the disposal of used nuclear fuel must be expeditiously employed. Greater R&D funding should be made available for the purpose of reducing the amount of used nuclear fuel.
- States should promote plans for renewable energy resource development and energy efficiency investment through federal R&D funding. Further incentives include energy efficiency and renewable energy tax credits, innovative rate designs, and other mechanisms. By reducing energy demand and increasing supply through non-emitting resources, such as renewable energy technologies and efficiency, emissions of greenhouse gases will also decrease.
- Given the importance of the railway, waterway, and transmission systems to the reliable provision of energy to consumers, greater funding should be appropriated to upgrade and improve the infrastructure of these critical systems. In addition, a national commitment to science, engineering and energy economics at all levels of education is needed to provide the skilled workforce necessary to design, construct and operate complex energy systems.

In addition to the Honorable J. Bennett Johnston serving as Chair of the Forum, the leadership included the following Co-Chairs of the CECA Forum's Working Groups: Carl Bauer, Director of the National Energy Technology Laboratory; Robert Hanfling, President and Chief Operating Officer of KFx Inc.; the Honorable Laura Chappelle, Commissioner of the Michigan Public Service Commission; Angelina S. Howard, Vice President, Office of the President, Nuclear Energy Institute; the Honorable Michael R. Peevey, President of the California Public Utilities Commission; and Robert W. Fri, Visiting Scholar, Resources for the Future.

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*Founded in 1973, the Consumer Energy Council of America (CECA) is the senior public interest organization in the U.S. focusing on the costs and benefits of energy policy to consumers. The organization's mission is to: "To promote solutions that ensure reliable, clean and affordable energy for all consumers."*