

The Senate Side

April 3, 2008

by State Senator John Putney

Energy issues remain on the forefront of legislation in the Iowa Senate. A good start to kicking off this new age of energy is a commission, whose sole purpose is providing information to the Iowa Legislature as well as overseeing the many uses and benefits of this expanding resource. The Senate passed legislation that establishes a 12 member commission on energy standards designed to help develop ideas to increase energy efficiencies. More importantly, the bill requires a reporting mechanism and may provide ideas that the Iowa Legislature can implement such as energy incentives.

I am hopeful that this is the dawn of a new era for Iowa when it comes to energy and powering the state. This is a starting point for Iowans to play an active role in deciding how the various types of energy are regulated, mandated and funded. It is truly the power of the people as ideas are generated and given back to the government.

As we have seen Iowa's exports double in the last 5 years we know that many Iowa industries rely on a stable power source. If we want to continue to maintain a strong business climate and encourage industry to move here, we need to keep energy in mind and go one step further to include alternative energy sources. We must make it easy and beneficial for all energy sources to be utilized.

Providing incentives to utility companies and smaller producers through tax credits is one way to boost production and provide more options for Iowans. Thanks to efforts such as these, Iowa now has seven wind turbine manufacturers either located or locating in Iowa. Iowa is truly adopting the attitude of "if you build it, they will come." We need to keep this momentum up as new businesses move to Iowa and continue to grow. This commission will bring grassroots ideas and accountability to an industry that Iowa is embracing and promoting whole-heartedly. Your thoughts and opinions are important to me. Please contact me at: 515-281-3371 or john.putney@legis.state.ia.us