

Draft NH State Energy Strategy comments,
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It is encouraging to see that the Draft NH State Energy Strategy includes so many fine elements. The emphasis on energy efficiency and conservation is clearly called for, and I hope it leads to a much stronger effort to make progress on eliminating wasted energy across the board. The approach to renewable energy technologies supports much of what we have learned over the last few years; I am especially supportive of the expansion of all solar applications, more use of woody biomass for heat (and not for electricity), and avoiding large terrestrial wind energy installations in NH.

I am also compelled to note that there are some opportunities to make this a much stronger strategy.

> In order to clarify what we are for, sometimes it is appropriate to articulate what we are against. We have learned that there are many downsides to NH's deep reliance on fossil fuels. A section describing exactly what those are could drive home the need for everyone in the state to give alternatives a closer look. A good start would be to mention the cost of fossil fuels, and the fact that the money we spend on them leaves the state. The other major problem is that there are adverse environmental effects all along the supply chain, from extraction to refining to transportation to final combustion.

> The repeated mention of natural gas as a part of our energy future is irresponsible from an environmental perspective, and should be completely re-evaluated. The impacts of hydrofracking on air and water quality are unacceptable. Natural gas should not be looked at as a "bridge fuel"; it is just another fossil fuel that has no place in a viable energy future for New Hampshire.

> The notion of "low cost" must be kept in perspective. Since expense is a primary driver of peoples' consumption habits, it stands to reason that if energy is cheap, we'll be less likely to be concerned about efficiency and conservation. Also, the hidden costs of environmental degradation that do not appear on energy bills must be accounted for.

> The glaring omission in the Transportation Sector of the Draft is that there is no mention of reduced highway speeds as a way to cut down on fuel consumption and vehicle emissions. You have got to be kidding. Instead, the speed limit was just raised. Obviously, lowering highway speeds is very unpopular with much of the citizenry, but if there are opportunities for reduced energy consumption, they need to be quantified and included in the discussion.

If we are going to build an energy system that works for us over the long term, we will all need to make some changes. Having a statewide strategy that offers us clear goals will be a big help.