



Hawaii's "Energy for tomorrow"

Posted by [Yankee](#) on January 18, 2006 - 9:58pm

Topic: [Alternative energy](#)

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(Hey everyone. Sorry to have ditched you recently. Nothing personal.)

Dave Roberts over at Gristmill has a [blog entry](#) about a proposed energy plan by Hawaii's governor Linda Lingle called "Energy for Tomorrow" (press release [here](#), fact sheet [here](#)).

The basic gist of it is that Hawaii doesn't have any fossil fuel resources of its own, and it isn't exactly in a prime location to receive cheap imports. However, the state does have a lot of sunlight, and apparently they're interested in increasing their use of ethanol, although neither the press release nor the fact sheet say which crop they intend to use to develop ethanol.

According to the press release, the project has an ambitious timeline:

When fully implemented in 2020, the conservation, renewable energy and alternative transportation fuels components of this plan will displace the importation of 110 million barrels of crude oil, retain \$6.32 billion in our economy that would have gone to purchase oil, and eliminate 49 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

Interestingly, according to the fact sheet, the plan also contains a proposal to better educate consumers about the pitfalls of dependency on fossil fuels:

Improve consumers' knowledge by establishing a system of petroleum and energy industry and market transparency, and enhance consumer benefits via competitive pricing with statewide data and information reporting and analyses of Hawaii's energy industry, markets, and systems for enforcement and energy-related agencies, and policymakers.

Another integral part of the plan is eliminating Hawaii's gas caps, which could potentially go a long way in decreasing fuel consumption for transportation.

Finally, there's a lot of reference in both documents to a transition to a hydrogen-based economy, but this seems even less realistic than the other oil substitutes the state seems to be considering. At best, the proposal just seems to be providing funding for research:

A world-class renewable hydrogen program, sustainable over the longer-term, will be established and funded to attract public and private sector investment in research and

development, testing, and commercialization projects. The program will build on the ongoing work of DBEDT, the University of Hawaii, and local and national public and private sector partners. An appropriation of \$750,000 is proposed for program support.

Additionally, \$10,000,000 is proposed to establish a hydrogen investment capital revolving fund to seed investments in hydrogen projects.

So what do you think? Pie in the sky, or, as David Roberts puts it, "a wicked pilot project for the nation at large" (if it passes the legislature)?



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