Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce

Boise Valley Economic Partnership (BVEP)
Boise Young Professionals
Leadership Boise

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IDAHO PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

May 20, 2015

Paul Kjellander, President
Idaho Public Utilities Commission
472 W. Washington St.
Boise, ID 83702-5983

IPC-E-15-01/AVU-E-15-01/
PAC-E-15-03

Dear President Kjellander:

Attached for your review is the Energy Policy of the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber strives to be the leading business advocacy organization in the Boise metro area.

The Chamber supports maintaining Idaho's overall low cost and reliable supply of energy through exploration, development, generation, transmission, and conservation. This philosophy is reflected in our support of the 2012 State Energy Policy to "Maintain Idaho's low-cost energy supply and ensure access to affordable energy for all Idahoans."

The Chamber's Boise Valley Economic Partnership (BVEP) is our region's public-private partnership for economic development expansion and retention. One recent success story is Gayle Manufacturing relocating its headquarters and developing a $25 million steel fabrication plant west of Caldwell. Currently, every manufacturing prospect has expressed great interest in our region's low-cost power supply. The capital investment potential of these 'value-added' manufacturing plants can be in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The resulting employment and the higher paying jobs will benefit our area and the entire state. We understand that under the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (PURPA), our area electric utility companies may be required to buy power at "avoided cost" even when their forecasts do not demonstrate a need for the power. Idaho's history of a reliable, low-cost, and environmentally responsible electrical supply system has been an important economic driver for our region. We encourage the Commission to seek to maintain that economic advantage and adopt policies striking an appropriate balance between the supply of, and demand for, both PURPA and non-PURPA generating resources.

The Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce appreciates your service to the people of the state of Idaho in your role of maintaining affordable energy for the betterment of the entire state and its economic future.

Sincerely,

Bill Connors, President & CEO
Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce

cc: Commissioners Mack Redford and Kristine Raper

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BOISE METRO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber Energy Policy

The Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce establishes an Energy Policy to guide the Board of Directors and Chamber membership to support certain energy objectives important to our regional and state economy and future economic development:

1. Support the exploration and development of a variety of energy sources, including hydro, natural gas, nuclear and alternative sources (wind, solar, biomass and geothermal). Advocate for a simplified land leasing process for exploration and development.

2. Support the generation of energy from hydro power (including support for dam relicensing) natural gas, coal, wind, solar, biomass, geothermal and nuclear. Advocate for simplification of the permitting process for power production.

3. Support transmission of energy through improving infrastructure, including construction of electrical lines and construction or extension of natural gas pipelines.

4. Support the efficient use of energy through conservation programs and green building design.

5. Support maintaining Idaho's overall low cost and reliable supply of energy through exploration, development, generation, transmission and conservation.

6. Support energy-related economic development and educational initiatives. Support the Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES) at the Idaho National Laboratory and the Energy Efficiency Research Institute Center (EERI) at Boise State University.

7. Endorse the 2012 State Energy Plan and the continued efforts of the Idaho Office of Energy Resources and its Strategic Energy Alliance.

Introduction from the 2012 State Energy Plan:

In 2012, the Idaho Legislature's Interim Committee on Energy, Environment and Technology finds that Idaho citizens and businesses continue to benefit from stable and secure access to affordable energy (e.g., electricity and fuels for transportation, space, and process heat).

Our state utilities and businesses have made notable progress in integrating abundant renewable energy into our energy networks, primarily in the form of renewable electric generation; which was a policy objective of the 2007 Plan.

State government, businesses, and consumers have shown leadership in developing innovative ways to reduce energy consumption through energy efficiency measures. Of particular note are the efforts of utilities and state government to help consumers reduce energy consumption and efforts in the business sector to do the same. Non-governmental organizations operating in the state, our Idaho universities, the Idaho National Laboratory, and many businesses and private citizens have contributed significantly to advancing our collective knowledge concerning energy issues, thereby feeding a healthy debate.

Energy issues will continue to grow in importance and impact for all Idahoans. Even with significant energy efficiency and conservation measures, energy consumption in Idaho is expected to increase substantially as our population increases and economic activity increases. This growth combined with uncertainties inherent in national energy markets stemming from challenging demand patterns, resource availability, cost of infrastructure and technology, life-cycle considerations for present generation sources, energy delivery and transmission constraints, and environmental and other concerns creates both challenge and opportunity in our energy future. As in 2007, a substantial percentage of the energy consumed in Idaho (approximately 70%) is produced outside of Idaho's borders; this fact is not necessarily a negative, as it is imperative that Idaho businesses and citizens acquire the lowest cost supplies where the markets allow. However, this exposes customers to a degree of vulnerability due to policy decisions outside of their control, a consideration to be addressed by the policy approach for our State.

With this recognition, the 2012 Idaho Energy Plan re-emphasizes the core objectives of the 2007 Energy Plan – to set the policy framework that will help enable a secure, reliable, affordable energy supply network while protecting public health and safety and enhancing economic competitiveness. The State's focus is on the five objectives of Idaho's energy future.

1. Ensure a secure, reliable, and stable energy system for the citizens and businesses of Idaho.
2. Maintain Idaho's low-cost energy supply and ensure access to affordable energy for all Idahoans.
3. Protect Idaho's public health, safety, and natural environment and conserve Idaho's natural resources.
4. Promote sustainable economic growth, job creation and rural economic development.
5. Provide the means for Idaho's energy Policies and Actions to adapt to changing circumstance