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Pew Report:
North Carolina Clean Energy Economy
Jobs Grew Two Times Faster than Overall Jobs
Emerging Sector Poised for Explosive Growth

RALEIGH – Jobs in North Carolina’s clean energy economy grew more than twice as fast as overall jobs between 1998 and 2007, according to The Pew Charitable Trusts in the most detailed look yet at this sector. In *The Clean Energy Economy: Repowering Jobs, Businesses and Investments Across America*, Pew developed a clear, data-driven definition of the clean energy economy and conducted the first-ever hard count across all 50 states of the actual jobs, companies and venture capital investments that supply the growing market demand for environmentally friendly products and services.

Pew’s analysis found that between 1998 and 2007, jobs in North Carolina’s clean energy economy grew at a rate of 15.3 percent while overall jobs in the state grew by 6.4 percent. North Carolina was part of a national trend that saw job growth in the clean energy economy outperforming overall job growth in 38 states and the District of Columbia over the same period. Nationally, jobs in the clean energy economy grew at a rate of 9.1 percent while total jobs grew by only 3.7 percent, between 1998 and 2007.

“North Carolina has a large share of America’s clean energy economy,” said Jason Sulham, North Carolina representative for the Pew Environment Group. “Jobs in the state’s clean energy sector grew more than twice as fast as jobs in the rest of its economy between 1998 and 2007. North Carolina attracted more than \$82 million in clean tech venture capital in the last three years alone. Those investments, along with the state’s renewable energy and energy efficiency policies, should help the state’s clean energy economy expand even further.”

Congressman Larry Kissell (D-N.C.), who participated in the release of the report, reaffirmed the need for Congress to develop supportive policies stating, “As we look for solutions to our current economic challenges, this report makes it clear that we must support the growth of a clean energy economy. In North Carolina, the potential is already being realized and we need to invest in policies and practices that will encourage continued job growth in the clean energy economy.”

North Carolina clean energy economy business leaders hailed the study.

“Sencera International Corporation is proud to be part of North Carolina’s clean energy economy, which is here today – and which is the future for North Carolina and North Carolinians,” said Olee Joel Olsen, Director of Business Development. “Today, the U.S. currently represents a small fraction of the world demand for solar panels. But that can be changed through smart policies.”

In 2007, there were nearly 17,000 jobs in North Carolina’s clean energy economy—more than the number of employees at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Unlike previous studies of the so-called

“green economy,” Pew’s numbers are a hard count of actual jobs, businesses and investments and do not rely on estimates, multipliers or projections. The report found that the emerging clean energy economy is creating well-paying jobs in every state for people of all skill levels and educational backgrounds. Included in Pew’s definition are jobs as diverse as engineers, plumbers, administrative assistants, construction workers, machine setters, marketing consultants, teachers and many others with annual incomes ranging from \$21,000 to \$111,000.

Federal and state lawmakers see the sector as helping to spur America’s economic recovery and protect the environment. North Carolina’s clean energy economy will receive a boost from the recently enacted American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which allocates nearly \$85 billion nationwide in direct spending and tax incentives for energy- and transportation-related programs. North Carolina provides financial incentives for clean energy as well, and the state’s renewable portfolio standard allows investor-owned utilities to meet 25 percent of their renewable energy requirement through more efficient sources; in 2021, this share will increase to 40 percent.

Pew’s definition of the clean energy economy is based on previous research and input from nationally recognized environmental scientists and economists, including an advisory panel convened to help guide our study. According to Pew, *“a clean energy economy generates jobs, businesses and investments while expanding clean energy production, increasing energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, waste and pollution, and conserving water and other natural resources.”* It comprises five categories: (1) Clean Energy, (2) Energy Efficiency, (3) Environmentally Friendly Production, (4) Conservation and Pollution Mitigation, and (5) Training and Support. The definition provides a groundbreaking framework for tracking jobs, investments and economic growth over time and allowing the public and private sector to evaluate the effectiveness of policy choices and investments.

“There is bipartisan support and a growing market demand for transitioning to the clean energy economy,” said Phyllis Cuttino, director, U.S. Global Warming Campaign, at the Pew Environment Group. “Americans understand the transition is good for the overall economy, is creating new opportunities for jobs and business growth, and helps protect our national security by reducing our dependence on foreign oil. Congress and the Obama Administration can and must produce energy and global warming legislation that creates jobs, enhances energy independence and sustains our environment.”

The complete study is available online at www.pewtrusts.org/cleanenergyeconomy.

ABOUT SENCERA INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 2003, Sencera International Corporation manufactures photovoltaic solar panels. In 2007, the company accepted a \$3.6 million investment, received the North Carolina Green Business Award, and raised an additional \$15.6 Million in 2008 to complete development of its new manufacturing platform. Sencera is focused on developing and manufacturing thin film silicon based solar modules, with full production expected to begin in the fourth Quarter of 2009. Sencera is the only solar module manufacturer in the Southeast.

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ABOUT THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

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