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Pew Report: West Virginia Clean Energy Economy Has Driven Jobs, But Needs Policy Boost

Emerging Sector Set to Expand

In 2007, there were more than 3,050 jobs in West Virginia's clean energy economy, according to The Pew Charitable Trusts in the most detailed study yet on this emerging sector.

The Clean Energy Economy: Repowering Jobs, Businesses and Investments Across America 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.

Nationwide, the number of jobs in America's emerging clean energy economy grew nearly two and a half times faster than overall jobs. By 2007, more than 68,200 businesses across all 50 states and the District of Columbia accounted for about 770,000 clean energy economy jobs, despite a lack of sustained public policy support.

West Virginia is one of the few states where growth in total jobs outpaced growth in the clean energy economy between 1998 and 2007. Total jobs in West Virginia grew less than 1 percent during that period, however.

"While West Virginia currently has a small piece of America's clean energy economy, it is poised to expand its share," said Lori Grange, interim deputy director of the Pew Center on the States. "West Virginia attracted nearly \$6 million in clean technology venture capital and registered 14 patents in the past three years. Given West Virginia's long history as a coal mining state, it is notable that just last month the state granted a permit to the Appalachian Power Company to seek to mitigate carbon dioxide pollution from coal-burning plants by capturing it and storing it deeply in the ground."

While previous studies have used various definitions and were based on modeling and multiplier effects, Pew performed 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 developed a clear, data-driven definition of the clean energy economy.

West Virginia'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. West Virginia provides financial incentives for clean energy as well.

According to Pew's definition, "*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.” This definition is based on previous research and input from nationally recognized environmental scientists and economists, including an advisory panel convened to help guide the study.

“Every state has a piece of America’s clean energy economy, and we are seeing a growing number jockeying to expand their share,” said Grange. “There is a potential competitive advantage for federal and state policy leaders who act now to spur jobs, businesses and investments in the clean energy sector. Those who don’t risk losing opportunities for economic growth and environmental sustainability.”

“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.

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