ES-4 Comments
Recommendation 17
Incentives and barrier removal (including interconnection rules and net metering arrangements) for Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and Clean Distributed Energy (DG)

The economic impacts of any legislation must be determined and be a part of the decision.

Technology should be able to stand on its own merits without government incentives.

need new integrated fiancing opportunties

There should be a cost/benefit analysis required. The benefits do not justify the costs using sound science. More taxes, regulations and red tape is not what will help Montana.
Co-ops don't like to allow net metering. Too many communities are served by co-ops...

Don't limit where you are going to remove barriers from. Maybe you need to lesson barriers for conventional energy development in an effort to help alternative energy to be developed and get a foothold. For instance, a big challenge for biofuels is water - it takes about 17 gallons of water for process per gallon of ethanol and if feed stock requirements are included, a total of about 1500 to 1700 gallons of water to produce one gallon of ethenol. Feedstock could include sugar beats and other crops that could be viable in Montana while using water from various sources (e.g., coal bed methane produced water)... Be creative and don't work yourself into a box!

Incentives are a good idea. Standardized interconnection and metering makes sense as well.

As I have already stated, small scale and community renewable energy resources are a good idea in theory, but they come with a cost that must not be ignored. The utility must balance loads and resources. Even small scaled variable renewable resources must be balanced by resources that the utilitly dispatches to maintain system integrity.

Any time I see USB program I picture charges on my utility bill. What does this option potentially mean to the individual consumer?

Decentralized. I see a future with community substations producing their local energy. No need to spend millions on transmission lines. Keep it all local and keep citizens self sufficient. Then any excess beyond what Montanas can use ship out of the state.

I would take this one step further to create a system of NET BILLING. This would encourage ranchers to put in a larger renewable energy system that would reduce the entire bill (for multiple meter on the property) rather than to just subtract from one designated meter.

not clear what this means.

Not knowlegable

Let the market decide.

If it makes sense, the free market will produce it. Stop subsidizing bad behavior.

Consumers need to be educated that installing an alternative renewable system is not a "cash cow" and they're not going to get rich!! They need to focus on their own home's efficiency and their energy usage habits first.

Small scale distributed generation is a pipe dream. Quit wasting our time and resources!

individuals can only do so much with this issue, we need strong and numerous governement action of many forms and formats...

"Provide incentives" Who pays and what are the net benefits?

Need to be cautious on net metering rules. Utility customers should not be subsidizing net meter generation projects thru higher rates.

I don't understand this one.

Excellent way to double down.

I would be willing to pay a significant premium, if I would be assured that power was being produced on my behalf in a carbon-neutral fashion. Of course, I know that all electrons are the same color...or invisible, actually. But electrical power/energy is routinely bought and sold between utilities and across state lines now.

Small scale and community renewable energy projects would be a wonderful initiative.

speak american!

YES. YES. YES. YES. YES! Time to stop subsidizing power producers, auto-makers, etc. when their only real incentive is profit and time to incentivize the consumer to make real, better choices regarding his/her GHB footprint.

i do not understand this.

Rules for net metering need to be increased not removed. When an individual hooks up some kind of device to the grid that individual must be held accountable for their effect on the grid, neighbors, and most importantly the safety of the workers on the powerlines.

This is not very clear and is too bureaucratic to respond to.

I don't really understand this one.

Northwestern Power was unable to answer basic net metering questions I posed and I was never called back by the "expert". Frustrating!

I'm not sure what this means.

If these make sense the market place will evelop these programs.
why should we have social power when we don't have social medicine

I like the idea of developing local energy networks.

How do we(the state of Montana) expect to see wind power generation when we won't allow industry into our state because of environmental controls or taxes. When one of these operations tries to do something here - we drive them out to other states or worse yet another country.

Small generation is not near as cost effective as larger wind farms, biomass or other renewable sources.

Whats with the continued focus on subsidy?

What a bunch of bureaucratic speak! I wonder what it means.

Maybe, but the time frame might not be realistic.

WHAT IS CHP?

I don't understand what is meant by CHP, and the last time I linked to the report to learn more, I lost all of my previous work on this survey! Support local small-scale renewable energy incentives.

Delete burdensome regulations to let people be creative. There are many innovative, non-governmental, entrepenurial people that just need to have the overly restrictive bureacracy get out of the way

Strongly support local small scale and community renewable energy.
I don't understand what "combined heat and power and clean distributed generation" is.

wake up it something that we do not need

As each area and utility are unique, let the individual operating areas determine their interconnection needs. Leave local control versus having mandates.

I keep seeing the word "incentives" which for me is code for increased taxes.

With the prices rapidly increasing, conserving natural resources is a matter the free market can handle without government mandates.

This would increase the barriers to local communities exploring renewable/efficient energy programs, not remove those barriers.

"Incentive" is such an ugly euphemism for "corporate welfare, taken by force from the hard-working taxpayer".

Absolutely

don't know anything about this topic

Not necessary.

This Action Plan was not a Montana grassroots Plan. It was the same plan written for California and other states. I do not support anything in this section. Montana's poor and middle class cannot pay any more for energy.

http://www.rightalk.com/asx/ggws.asx
The above video destroys the myth of human caused global warming. Get informed. The truth shall make you free.

We must strive to make it easier for individuals and small businesses across montana to develope and advance renewable resrouce use and to connect with the system.

Another incentive, we have just about exhausted our reserves in the Coal and Oil reserve funds for this generation and the next. More government regulation "Interconnection rules" will not make the energy suppliers any more efficient. they will have to staff another office to handle the paper work, which will mean more heat and lights in the office which will reduce the energy efficiency.

This sounds like controlling industry based on the flawed theory that is GHG scare-and-control tactic

incentives are good. then it is a choice and not a reuirement. I don't think that we need to create standards and rules. give the people a cost effective choice and I feel they will make the right decission.

The development and utilization of clear interconnection rules is desirable. Agree with cautionary note of committee that any net metering requirements must be carefully crafted to avoid creating ratepayer subsidies of combined heat and power facilities.

Anyone should be able to provide energy to the grid. Net metering should cost nothing to anyone willing to provide any renewable energy to the grid.

The development and utilization of clear interconnection rules is desirable. Agree with cautionary note of committee that any net metering requirements must be carefully crafted to avoid creating ratepayer subsidies of combined heat and power facilities.

I like incentives to get people to investigate these items, I don't understand them enough to specifically require levels at this time.

Don't know enough about it.

As an electric cooperative that offers net metering we belive the only real barriers to be removed are economic. Unless you are going to heavily subsidize the cost of DG it will not happen because the economics don't work out.

this is not clear to me. Is it just about integrating all the different types of energy possibilities?

I vehemently support incentives for decentralized energy generation.

unleashed net metering is costly and would lead to extended power outtages, since each power out would require line crews to inspect EVERY net meterin the outtage prior to returning power. Not to mention potentially dangerous for the crews. Also who pays for the cost of unregulation?
It is truly amazing how small this amount of energy truly is. We can do much better than this.

We need much more emphasis on small-scale community programs in efficiency, as well as in generation of supply. Montana could set up efforts that would begin with a few selected small communities such as Ekalaka and Choteau, and use lessons learned there for individual neighborhoods in large communities such as Billings, Great Falls, and Bozeman.

raise taxes and tax breaks for the rich

Abstain due to unfamiliarity with idea.

I have no idea what this means. ES-4

No on this. Any renewable developed with government largess probably isn't feasible. Feasible power generation comes from the free market. In the free market if it works better it gets used. In government it gets funded if it's popular or if the pitchman can fool the politicians.

I am for wind and solar power. We can do this!

Need to have bigger $rewards for using alternative energies. The grid idea also has merit as long as it is not privitized and thus monopolized. 2020 is too far out as a dead line.

Need more details on how it will be done.

Because virtually all electric cooperatives offer net metering, the only remaining "barriers" or concerns to net metering are economic and safety barriers.Even a small net metering generator has the potential to back feed a power line at thousands of volts, posing serious danger to line personnel and the public. Standardized rules that allow safety inspection verifications to protect line personnel and the public are important and must address the question of who pays for inspection and verification of a net metering disconnection.Improperly structured, net metering can easily cause major cost shifts by allowing net metering customers to bypass poles and wires operating costs. These costs comprise of half of a typical co-op's electric rates.

More money spent.

Small-scale power production is best: more robust & smaller footprint. Also keeps money in the community

Not familiar with the these terms if they rely on renewable/conservation energy great - if not I do not support!

I am not sure what this means, but I am sure it will cost me alot of money.

Need to be mindful that not all locally generated power is green or desirable (ie: coal or low-head hydro in senstive areas).

Let the truth be knowen! This incentive will give Government the "go ahead" to run every buisness within the State. Self-owenership will be reduced to nothing more than a word found in the dictionary.

This is not a function of the State.

I'm not clear on what you mean here...rephrasing this in more understandable terms or better example legislation could help...

All of these are 'feel good' expensive bulls**t legislation. Global warming is NOT a fact (cold records set last winter in the southern hemisphere) so it might be Northern hemisphere warming, but not global. Secondly, latest studies of the sun spots (that control global temperatures more than humans) indicate that within 20 years we will be back in a 'mini-ice age'. Not politically correct, but MUCH more accurate.

Biomass cogeneration plants could provide all needed power and heat at the point of use, thus eliminating the need for extensive grid system or long transmission lines as for wind power.

Compressed air? Geeze, all you need to do is to put a tap on D.C. Someday soon, it might be a tap in Montana.

Too little too late. 80% of energy from renewables by 2025.

Regulations increase cost and who pays for it in the final analysis?

•Montana’s electric cooperatives do not oppose standardized net metering rules. The question is: What should be contained in those standards?

•Because virtually all electric cooperatives offer net metering, the only remaining “barriers” to net metering are economic and safety barriers.

•Improperly structured, net metering can easily cause major cost shifts by allowing net metering customers to bypass poles and wires operating costs. These costs comprise one half of a typical co-op’s electric rates.

•Co-op net metering policies tend to protect consumers who do not net meter against what can be – depending on the specifics of net metering rules – enormous cost shifts.

•Smaller co-ops are highly susceptible to major cost shifts from imprudently structured net metering policies.

•Safety issues from the interconnection of customer generators remain of major concern to electric cooperatives.

•OSHA requires that each customer generator interconnection be physically inspected to verify disco

Maybe?

Tax break for the rich.

What does this mean????

I guess I don't know too much about how electricity is moved along the lines . There should be a way to shift power so if the wind isn't blowing in one area of the state - you can bet it's blowing in another area and could send power to the still area.

Don't understand this one.

Can the state override FERC rules pertaining to interconnections? FERC rules are in place to provide an even playing field for anyone who wants to interconnect. These rules provide a mechanisum for protecting the reliability of the grid and safety of electrical workers.

Make the technologies for "clean" energy economically viable & price competitive with current energy sources & the market will address these issues on it's own for a lot less of your & my money that the government can.

carbon tax in discuise and more money going from tax payers to big corporations.

Don't understand Combined Heat and Power

There is not enough detailed information to assess what cost/benefit is. How do we know if targets are feasible?

Excellent.

No Position

Again, we DON'T HAVE the density needed to make combined power applications practicable except in limited cases that DO NOT REQUIRE "government incentives." Never mind that most WILL NOT have NIMBY moron support. Stop smokescreening.

I give this a four with reservations, as I havn't read the details. Intent looks reasonable.

These are already implemented by electric coops. No State meddling is needed.

Be flexible in enforcing numeric goals.

Why incent the least cost affective integration of wind that has the greatest negative impacts and safety concerns? To incent 30 cent per kwh photovoltaics rahter than focusing on the more cost affecive large scale is just foolish from a societal fiscal aspect.

The net metering tool will help laed us to dispersed energy generation which is eventually where we should be headed.

but not at the expese of other power sources.

level the playing field and eliminate barriers to entry

The state should not subsidise or otherwise provide incentives to the private sector. This has a market-distorting effect and by favouring existing technologies, this policy would delay the onset of new technologies.

THOUGHT THESE GOALS ARE IN PLACE NOW ???

Respondent does not have sufficient information or knowledge to rank this recommendation.

Great! Net-metering is already being piloted in some places (e.g., Flathead Electric Co-op did their first one in 2007)--learn from these examples to guide program.

My understanding of how net metering works is this. I put in a windmill (and get a tax credit) - when I produce more than I use, the power supply co must buy it back from me. When I use more than I produce, my meter runs the other direction. However, there is no way for the power supply co to know how much energy I will need, therefore I am potentially forcing them to buy from the spot market (expensive). But, my electric prices are no higher than my neighbors. Guess that means my neighbor is subsidizing my power (both with the tax credit and the spot market buys) We should definitely be encouraging more of this activity - and, on a larger scale.

unfamiliar with this?

there is climate change. But mans impact is limited. Maybe as little as less than 3-5% need cost benefit analysis

Much higher targets for small scale renewable generation should be aimed for.

Small local plants integrating the system will be very expensive

Does this mean helping communities produce clean energy then share the excess with other communities? That would be a good plan. "Inch by inch, life's a cinch; yard by yard, life is hard" applies to a lot of things.

Lowering barriers will increase renewable energy projects. The current incentives for renewable energy in S45 of federal tax law put wood at a competitive disadvantage to wind and solar. This has become a barrier to the development of markets for woody biomass – i.e. renewable power plants that would use wood or other biomass.

Not enough info

Remove barriers to interconnection in small utilities. There is plenty of data to overcome the ancient excuses the coops use to discourage interconnection with small re systems.

Standardized rules that allow safety inspection verifications to protect line personnel and the public are important and must address the questiohn of who pays for inspection and verification of a net metering disconnection.
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