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Gov. Heineman Endorses 25 x '25 Goal for Increased Renewable Energy Production

(Lincoln, Neb.) Gov. Dave Heineman announced his support today for a national initiative advocating that 25 percent of the energy consumed in the U.S. come from renewable sources by the year 2025. Known as 25 x '25, the initiative is gaining support among policymakers, energy industry and agricultural organizations.

The Governor sent a letter today to leaders of the 25 x '25 Energy Work Group conveying his support for the 25 x '25 initiative, saying "I believe that farmers and livestock producers have an important role to play in ensuring that the goal of America's energy independence becomes a reality."

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, six percent of the nation's energy currently comes from renewable resources.

The Governor's letter goes on to say, "Ensuring that 25 percent of our nation's energy production comes from renewable sources by the year 2025 will require increased diversity and investments in industries responsible for energy produced from clean, renewable and agriculture-based resources. As a leading agriculture state, Nebraska is positioned to become a major contributor in this national endeavor."

Sen. Bob Kremer of Aurora has announced the formation of a steering committee for the 25 x '25 initiative in Nebraska. Kremer serves as chairman of the Legislature's Agriculture Committee and plans to introduce a legislative resolution in support of the national initiative.

Sen. Kremer said, "Corn and soybean producers have shown how the ag sector can become modern day providers of biofuels, but agriculture can play an even larger role in producing other forms of renewable energy. An emerging opportunity exists for crop, livestock and grass producers, as well as tree farmers, to become major producers of energy."

Last year, Nebraska was the country's third largest ethanol producing state, and currently leads the nation in the number of ethanol plants under construction. Since the early 1990s, Nebraska has attracted approximately \$1.5 billion in capital investments due to development of the ethanol industry.

Other agriculture-based resources are also contributing to Nebraska's growing renewable energy sector, including the development of biodiesel from soybeans and construction of methane digesters that produce electricity while greatly reducing odors from livestock waste. Wind and solar power, along with the ability to develop ethanol from native grasses and crop residues offer additional opportunities for increased energy production.

"I applaud the effort to increase our nation's stake in renewable energy," Gov. Heineman

said. “By partnering with individual states, this effort allows room for agricultural producers and others involved in development of renewable energy to pursue the path that makes the most sense for producers and local economies.”

More information on the 25 x '25 initiative is available online at <http://www.25x25.org>

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