



## Western Governors' Association Policy Resolution 13-09

### *Energy Policy*

#### **A. BACKGROUND**

1. Energy policy and the development of energy resources are major priorities for every governor in the Western Governors' Association.
2. Western Governors recognize that not every state, territory, or flag island approaches energy use and development in the same way, but the governors remain committed to seeing states develop policies and use their energy endowments to the maximum benefit of their citizens, the region, and the nation.
3. The West is the energy breadbasket of the United States. Regional production is indispensable to meeting energy demand at the national level. The West accounts for:
  - a. A full 100% of the operational geothermal electric power generation. Western states have all of the high yield geothermal energy capacity in the continental United States.
  - b. Over 90% of non-federal petroleum production. Expansion of domestic production, primarily in the West, is projected to make the United States petroleum independent within the decade.
  - c. Nearly 70% of natural gas production. Western states are at the forefront of innovation in unconventional natural gas production.
  - d. Nearly 70% of the hydroelectric power generation. The Pacific Northwest has the largest hydropower output in the nation.
  - e. Over 65% of wind power generation capacity. Western states have the largest contiguous areas of high value wind power resources in the nation.
  - f. Nearly 60% of installed solar power capacity. The Southwest has some of the highest identified solar energy resource areas on the planet.
  - g. Nearly 60% of coal production. Coal is the historic fuel of lowest monetary cost per kilowatt hour and constitutes the largest share of the national electricity generation mix.
  - h. Over 20% of biomass electricity generation. The West has the largest contiguous areas of high-yield biomass energy resource potential in the nation.
  - i. Over 15% of nuclear power generation. All domestic uranium mining is also conducted in the Western states.
4. The Western Governors have published the [10-Year Energy Vision for the West](#), describing resources in the West and stating WGA goals and objectives for energy.

5. The Western Governors recognized the following goals as energy policy priorities for the West.
  - a. Put the United States on a path to energy security.
  - b. Ensure energy is clean, affordable and reliable by providing a balanced portfolio of renewable, non-traditional and traditional resources.
  - c. Increase energy productivity associated with electricity and natural gas.
  - d. Establish an energy distribution infrastructure (electricity transmission and pipelines), siting and permitting system that facilitates the development of necessary infrastructure while maintaining wildlife, natural resource and environmental protection.
  - e. Protect Western wildlife, natural resources and the environment.
  - f. Make the West an international leader in energy education and the development of new technologies.
6. Energy development in the West takes an all-of-the-above approach, including energy efficiency and controlling emissions, while protecting the environment, wildlife, and natural resources.
7. The Western states and U.S. Flag islands in the Pacific have the resources to drive job creation and economic development through broad energy industry growth.
8. The Merchant Marine Act of 1920 has prevented noncontiguous states, territories and U.S. Flag islands from being supplied with domestically produced energy commodities.

**B. GOVERNORS' POLICY STATEMENTS**

1. Western Governors adopt the [10-Year Energy Vision for the West](#) as the energy policy for WGA.
2. Western Governors call on the federal government to lift a barrier to domestic free trade between the contiguous United States and the noncontiguous states, territories and U.S. flag islands by the federal Maritime Act of 1920 by allowing those jurisdictions to receive energy commodities produced in the mainland but transported by foreign vessels.
3. Western Governors recognize that the states, territories, and flag islands have effectively regulated the practice of hydraulic fracturing and redundant federal regulation is not required.

**C. GOVERNORS' MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE**

1. The Governors direct WGA staff to develop, as appropriate and timely, detailed annual work plans to advance policy positions and goals contained within this resolution. Those work plans shall be presented to, and approved by, Western Governors prior to implementation. WGA staff shall keep the Governors informed, on a regular basis, of their progress in implementing approved annual work plans.
2. The Governors direct that this resolution and the [10-Year Energy Vision for the West](#) be transmitted to the Western Congressional Delegation, the Administrator of the EPA, the Chairman of FERC, the Director of BLM, the Chairman of NRC and the Secretaries of Energy, Commerce, Interior, Agriculture and Defense.