

Transportation Fuels for the Future

Among the most critical issues we face as a nation is our dependence on petroleum for nearly all of our transportation fuel. Global competition and increasing demand for this resource presents great risks to our future energy supplies, the environment and the economy. It is these risks that have spurred interest in and development of alternative transportation fuels, and the Western states are in an excellent position to become leading producers. Western Governors placed a priority on assessing the West's alternative and replacement fuels when they adopted their 2006 resolution, "Transportation Fuels for the Future." Leads for this initiative are Govs. Arnold Schwarzenegger (Calif.), Brian Schweitzer (Mont.), Brad Henry (Okla.), Mike Rounds (S.D.) and Christine Gregoire (Wash.). An advisory committee appointed by the governors oversaw the process of creating a policy roadmap. More than 100 stakeholders and experts participated in working groups that analyzed the potential and the challenges of commercializing six alternative fuels: biofuels, biodiesel, hydrogen, coal-to-liquids, electricity and compressed natural gas/propane. A seventh group of experts focused on gains that could be made in vehicle fuel efficiency technology and policy.

The working group reports provide a thorough analysis of the capital, infrastructure and environmental challenges associated with scaling-up production of each fuel base. In February 2008, the advisory committee submitted an overarching report to the Western Governors, who followed up by adopting policy for implementing many of the committee's recommendations.

The ***Transportation Fuels for the Future*** report contains cross-cutting recommendations that allow for the expansion of all alternative fuel options. Among the recommendations are:

- Provide leadership at the state level to promote fuel efficiency.
- Create partnerships for alternative fuel vehicles and alternative fuel use between public and private fleets.
- Set measurable goals to chart a state's progress in integrating alternative fuels, including: the number of pilot or demonstration projects; the percent of transportation fuels consumed within the state per year; and the amount of reduction in greenhouse gases attributed to alternative fuel use and vehicle fuel efficiency.
- Adopt a common methodology and modeling infrastructure to evaluate greenhouse gas emissions and identify land, air and water impacts.
- Implement a regional framework for cooperation on the development of a performance-based greenhouse gas standard for transportation fuels and allow the standard to be considered for adoption on a state-by-state basis.
- Plan for distribution of high volume alternative fuels and other infrastructure components, including storage, rail and tanker trucks.
- Identify research into feedstocks that are new to a state and provide incentives for feedstock production by encouraging producers to change to new cropping regimes.
- Obtain industry advice on needed directions in workforce development. Developing an alternative fuel sector requires a workforce trained in the chemistry, plant biology, chemical and electrical engineering disciplines.

The WGA resolution and all of the reports developed by the advisory committee and the working groups are available on the WGA Web site at:

<http://www.westgov.org/wga/initiatives/transfuels/index.html>.