

ENERGY PROPOSAL (underlined=new;struckout=deleted, relative to the current platform plank)

SPONSOR: Platform Standing Group

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SUBJECT: Energy in the Ecology & Earth Stewardship section. Personal and global responsibility, ecological wisdom, and sustainability are the involved 10 Key Values of the GP.

Background and Purpose.

Conservation, efficiency and renewable energy sources are essential elements of our proposed energy policy.

~~The 2000-2001 California energy "crisis" reminded us to reaffirm this.~~ We need to develop strategies that recognize that fossil fuels are formed in geological time and cannot be replaced in the short term and they are being depleted rapidly (except coal). Moreover, our current dependence on fossil fuels (especially coal) is creating unacceptable environmental damage, including climate change that will bring great hardship to many humans and non-human life.

Conserving energy will reduce the need for fossil fuels and dangerous nuclear energy. We can also lessen our dependence upon energy sources by driving more fuel efficient cars and by simplifying our lifestyles to include things such as living closer to our work[see [Transportation](#) plank], and eating lower on the food chain.

U.S. dependence on imported oil contributes to our military involvement in other parts of the world. Elimination or reduction of this dependence would eliminate or diminish the reason, or the excuse, for such military involvement. In addition, with concern about further attacks, the security of California energy resources becomes more important. Decentralizing energy production is important to improve security from attack and also for less dependence on large facilities feeding into massive grids that are easily disrupted.

Proposed state and national energy policies would loosen environmental protections. Clean air, clean water, endangered species, and the Alaska Wildlife Refuge are all threatened. Many local communities, often poor and minority, are being threatened by mining activities, waste storage, waste incineration, dirty production facilities and other assaults. Nuclear Power is being promoted as a solution to global warming but it leaves long-lived and dangerous wastes in its wake [see [Environmental Justice](#) and [Nuclear Contamination](#) planks]

Streamlining of permits in response to the 2000-2001 energy "crisis" ~~has~~ changed the process for siting power plants. It sidestepped previous environmental legislation and the process by which residents participated in the decision making. Also it has ~~led~~ ~~lead~~ to an increase in the number of fossil fuel peaker plants which are used when demand for power is the highest. They are less efficient than new full-size natural gas plants and they emit much more pollution per unit of energy produced.

Regulation vs. Deregulation vs. Public Power

California's failed attempt to deregulate energy utilities indicated ~~points out~~ the dangers of investing our energy future in the hands of an energy market committed only to ~~the~~ maximizing of profits. Deregulation has failed to produce the promised rate reduction for residents, but rather has caused our bills to soar.

Deregulation gave the three privately held California utilities a cash windfall that allowed their holding companies to control the allegedly competitive market. They ~~have~~ invested in energy plants in the U.S. and worldwide, and own billions of dollars in assets not touchable by the state to rectify the outstanding utility debts. Under deregulation, many of the state's utility generation facilities were sold to out-of-state companies who then sold that power on the open free market at exorbitant profits.

A growing pool of experience shows that Municipal Utilities Districts and other public power agencies run more efficiently and provide better customer service than Investor Owned Utilities.

California's deregulation law provided a small fund to promote renewable sources, low income assistance, and energy efficiency. The rejected alternative for renewable sources, which was pushed by environmentalists, would have required all electricity generators to produce 10% of their energy from renewable sources. This left a voluntary effort by independent power suppliers to market "green power" to customers. The effort resulted in very little new renewable power sources.

Global Climate Change

In the last decade, the Earth has experienced some of the highest average temperatures ever. The United States is responsible for emitting approximately 25% of all greenhouse gases worldwide. Energy generation, including transportation uses, account for most of this. The Kyoto Protocol committed our country to reducing emissions to 1990 levels. It should be adopted nationally and should commit our state as well to reducing emissions to 1990 levels. [see [Protection of the Atmosphere](#) plank

The Green Party of California proposes:

- ♣ Phase out fossil fuels as an energy source to the extent possible and convert to renewable sources. Require all electricity sellers to procure at least 30% of their energy from renewable sources. ~~This Renewable Standard Portfolio for California should rise to 20% by 2010.~~
- ♣ Use subsidies, incentives and regulations to encourage the development of such renewable sources as passive solar for heating and cooling buildings, solar water heating, solar electricity (photovoltaics hydrogen fuel, biomass geothermal, ocean, wind and small scale hydroelectric). For example, reinstate the "direct access" option for residential consumers

so that they can get power from companies using renewable sources.

- ♣ Establish higher energy efficiency standards for lighting, home and office appliances and industrial motors; and increase rebate and replacement programs.
- ♣ Require energy efficiency, passive solar and solar water heating in building codes. Do not permit homeowner associations and condo associations to restrict member owners from installing solar equipment on their commonly held rooftops and hanging out laundry.
- ♣ Support a massive project of energy conservation. We must make up for years of underfunding of energy conservation. We need more efficient appliance purchase rebates, small business conservation loans and grants, training and small business development for energy service providers, energy conservation innovation and curriculum in public school science courses on how renewable energy sources work.
- ♣ Include information in utility bills about where to obtain energy saving products.
- ♣ Restructure electricity rates so that residents are not paying more than big business. Require large users who have not done all they can to reduce energy use to pay more for electricity. Develop a tiered residential pricing system that takes into account family size.
- ~~♣ Work toward full public ownership and democratic control of energy production and distribution. Make our supply of energy more secure and affordable through localized, decentralized, energy production, with a strong component of municipal ownership to provide nonprofit competition to private providers~~
- ♣ Require utilities to accept net metering (the selling of the excess power to the grid by private generators) to encourage building of alternative energy generation and stipulate that it be done at retail rates.
- ♣ Use "time-of-use" pricing as much as possible and install time-of-day meters for large users.
- ♣ Create an incentive program to encourage conservation by landlords. Landlords refuse to pay to insulate homes, etc. because the tenant pays the energy bill, so the landlord has no financial incentive.
- ♣ Cities or utilities should have someone designated to educate energy wasters. Someone that people would be able to call when they see careless energy wasting, like parking lot lights left on all day at a big box store.
- ♣ Stop subsidies for the research and development of nuclear power. and Shut down and decommission ~~oppose license extensions for nuclear power plants. Shut down~~ existing nuclear power plants (San Onofre and Diablo Canyon in California) and replace them with renewable sources. Repeal the federal Price-Anderson Act, which limits the financial

liability of the nuclear industry in case of accidents. Insurance companies will not cover nuclear power plants, so this liability is a subsidy to the nuclear power industry now borne by taxpayers.

- ♣ Repeal ~~Governor Davis's~~ the "permit streamlining process" for siting power plants. Use solar to meet peak demand.
- ♣ Adopt the Kyoto Protocol on global warming and implement measures as soon as possible to reduce national and state carbon dioxide emissions to 1990 levels.
- ♣ Employ union labor in green energy projects.
- ♣ To better distribute renewable sources, there should be more emphasis on individual solar power from photovoltaic panels installed on every roof possible and subsidized by the government with increased buy-down rates and low-interest loans to those who need them.
- ♣ Make our supply of energy more secure through decentralized energy production, including new technologies such as hydrogen fuel and fuel cells, and less dependence on outside sources of energy. We should seek more energy independence within California borders.
- ♣ Prohibit sale of power generating and distribution assets to out-of-state power companies who would not be subject to California Public Utilities Commission oversight and control.
- ♣ When Green Power marketers reenter the market here they should provide new renewables and avoid top-down, anti-democratic, funder-led objectives.
- ♣ Replace aging, inefficient and polluting plants.

COMMITTEE DECISION . The revised platform was suggested by the resolution to close California nuclear power reactors that passed at the Berkeley General Assembly on April 30 2011. Revisions appeared on September 2; October 13 2011.

RESOURCES: This is a revision of an existing GPCA platform plank.