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Rep. Sloan Participates in Two Dept. of Energy Meetings

Rep. Tom Sloan (R, Lawrence) participated in two U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) planning sessions. Sloan is a member of the Electricity Advisory Committee (EAC) and its Energy Storage, Transmission, and Smart Grid subcommittees. Committee members heard a presentation on Europe's Low-Carbon plans and discussed activities that the Department of Energy should undertake.

"The EAC's role is to recommend policies and strategies to senior management in the Dept. of Energy," Sloan said. "In addition to substantive comments regarding the subcommittee reports, my comments focused on the Department's need to reach out to state policy-makers and regulators and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to ensure that the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) clean air regulations take into account costs to consumers, adequate timelines for construction of new generation, and maintenance of the electric system's reliability. Most thoughtful persons accept the need to reduce carbon emissions, but the process must be affordable and responsible or an unintended consequence will be electricity shortages and much higher prices."

Because of his EAC membership, Rep. Sloan was invited to the DOE's Quadrennial Technology Review Capstone Workshop. The DOE-QTR's objective is to receive public comment on the DOE energy technology portfolio, composition of activities the DOE supports, and establishing prioritization of research and development programs to address the country's energy needs.

Dr. Steven Chu, Secretary of Energy, spoke to the participants about challenges related to reducing the nation's carbon footprint. Sessions were held on transportation, stationary emitters, the role of the DOE in picking technology "winners," and balancing the generation portfolio.

"My comments focused on three principles: a) the cost of technological developments and the speed of adoption will have an impact on consumer electric bills as well as the air we breathe, and both must be taken into consideration as energy policies are developed; b) a balanced energy supply portfolio, including conservation, is the best hedge against energy supply interruptions and unchecked cost increases; and c) the DOE should focus on bringing competing ideas from the laboratories to field tests to stimulate creative problem solving, so long as each technology is compatible with the electric system as a whole so as to have interoperability, without a sole source vendor," Sloan said. "I also commended the Department for its support of a transmission technology workshop for public policy-makers and for an interstate transmission

siting Compact."

"It is important that Kansans have a voice in advising the Dept. of Energy," said Sloan. "Too often the voices heard are those of large businesses and the most populous states. Opportunities for Kansans to help solve the nation's electric energy supply needs in a reduced carbon world are very large. Getting the federal government leaders to listen to us and accept our role is crucial."

Rep. Sloan is Chairman of the Vision 2020 Committee and a member of the Energy & Utilities, Local Government, and Agriculture & Natural Resources Budget Committees, and the Joint Committee on Energy & the Environment. In addition to serving on the Department of Energy's Electricity Advisory Committee, he is also Vice Chairman of the Council of State Governments' Environment Task Force, a member of the National Conference of State Legislatures' Energy Supply Task Force.

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