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Montana Lawmakers Urged to Address Global Warming with Clean Energy and Carbon Capture

HELENA – A coalition of religious and community leaders urged Montana lawmakers to move forward with carbon capture and clean energy legislation to address global warming pollution. Lawmakers are considering a variety of bills promoting clean energy technologies and providing for the capture and storage of carbon dioxide pollution from coal plants.

“The jury is in. Global warming is happening, it’s human-caused, and it’s time we do something about it,” said Reverend Brady Vardemann, executive director of the Montana Association of Churches. “As stewards of this planet, we have a moral obligation to do something about it.”

In a written statement, former Secretary of State and Senate President Bob Brown, urged Montana lawmakers to prioritize bills addressing global warming pollution in the 2007 legislative session.

“Like many people, I was initially skeptical when reports of the global warming phenomena began to appear a decade ago,” said Brown. “Today, while we don’t know everything, I think we know more than enough to address this developing threat of global climate change.”

Kelly Flaherty Settle, who with her husband own and operate the Settle Ranch at Canyon Creek, Montana, also called on the legislature to act to develop renewable energy sources.

“The technology exists to diversify into clean renewable energy sources, wind power, biodiesel and the like,” said Settle. “This legislature sits at a crossroads. They have the opportunity to pass bills that promote clean energy technologies as well as bills providing for new technologies for coal development.”

“It’s time to set aside our differences and work together to be part of the solution,” said Senator Mike Cooney, a democrat from Helena. “There’s so much we can do to help Montana diversify into clean energy sources and do more with less by providing incentives for energy efficiency.”

Speakers at today’s event included:

- State Senator John Brueggeman (R-Polson)
- Missoula Mayor John Engen

- Montana Association of Churches Executive Director Reverend Brady Vardemann
- State Senator Mike Cooney (D-Helena)
- State Representative Betsy Hands (D-Missoula)
- Montana rancher Kelly Flaherty Settle

“It’s time we take Montana’s future into our own hands,” said Missoula Mayor John Engen. “We can’t wait for federal regulators to get with the picture. We need to be working in our cities, in our counties, and across the state to stop global warming pollution.”

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