

GOVERNOR LINGLE AND NATION'S GOVERNORS FOCUS ON SECURING A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

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HONOLULU — Governor Linda Lingle will join the nation's governors in Washington, D.C., for the National Governors Association's (NGA) annual winter meeting (Feb. 22 – 26). The focus of this year's NGA conference is "Securing a Clean Energy Future," which complements the Lingle-Aiona Administration's ongoing "Energy for Tomorrow" initiative. It also ties in with the unprecedented partnership formed last month between the State of Hawai'i and U.S. Department of Energy to increase the state's energy independence by using clean, renewable resources to supply 70 percent or more of Hawai'i's energy needs by 2030.

Governor Lingle serves on the NGA's eight-member energy task force, which is co-chaired by Governors Tim Pawlenty (Minnesota) and Kathleen Sebelius (Kansas). Other energy task force members include Governors Jodi Rell (Connecticut), Charlie Crist (Florida), Brian Schweitzer (Montana), Ed Rendell (Pennsylvania) and Chris Gregoire (Washington).

Governor Pawlenty, the current NGA chair (2007-2008), launched a year-long initiative to enlist the efforts of all governors to move the United States toward a cleaner, more independent and more secure energy future. NGA's Securing a Clean Energy Future initiative seeks to make the U.S. a global leader in energy efficiency, clean technology, energy research and alternative fuels.

"Hawai'i is the most oil dependent state in America with more than 90 percent of our energy supply dependent on imported fuel," said Governor Lingle. "Many of the innovative steps we are taking to increase Hawai'i's energy independence and use of clean, renewable energy can serve as a model for the nation. At the same time, there are a lot of renewable energy strategies we can learn and adapt from other states. This year's NGA conference will put Hawai'i at the forefront as we work together to develop long-term solutions to meet future energy challenges for both our state and our nation."

As part of the discussion on energy independence, governors will hear from energy industry leaders and clean energy advocates, including Thomas Friedman, Pulitzer Prize winning author, New York Times columnist and renewable energy advocate; Jeffrey Immelt, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of General Electric Company; Edward Kelly, vice president, North American Gas and Power, Wood MacKenzie Limited; Jonathan Schrag, founder partner, Hudson Strategic Energy Advisors; and R. James Woolsey, venture partners, Vantage Point, and former director of Central Intelligence Agency.

Other issues to be discussed by the governors during the three days of meetings include national surface transportation policy and finance, innovative strategies to turn around struggling schools, and the future of long-term care. The governors will also meet with President George W. Bush and members of his cabinet at the White House. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the National Governors Association.

While in Washington, Governor Lingle will also meet with Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne to discuss the proposal to acquire the 850-acre Turtle Bay property to preserve the five-mile coastline and other natural resources along O'ahu's North Shore; ongoing efforts to protect the Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Monument; and other efforts to protect and enhance Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources.

She will also meet with Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman and Andy Karsner, assistant secretary of energy efficiency and renewable energy, U.S. Department of Energy, to continue discussions on the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative.

Additional meetings will be announced as they are confirmed.

Governor Lingle will be accompanied by members of her cabinet and senior advisors including: Ted Liu, director, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism; Major General Robert Lee, state adjutant general; Linda Smith, senior advisor – policy; and Lenny Klompus, senior advisor – communications.

The Governor will arrive in Washington on Feb. 21 and will return to Honolulu on Feb. 27.

For more information on Hawai'i's Energy for Tomorrow initiative and the Hawai'i Clean Energy Initiative, visit Governor Lingle's Web site at www.hawaii.gov/gov/energy.

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