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Wisconsin Business Council: Members view plan to accelerate Wisconsin's green economy with optimism

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Council members leading efforts to create green jobs while conserving energy and increasing efficiency

MADISON – Members of the Wisconsin Business Council are among the state's leaders in creating green jobs even as they increase efficiency and conserve energy. On Thursday, the group's board of directors applauded efforts to achieve a greener economy for Wisconsin and indicated their support for bipartisan efforts to achieve the vision set forth in Gov. Jim Doyle's Clean Energy Jobs Act.

The Clean Energy Jobs Act incorporates the recommendations of Doyle's Task Force on Global Warming and has the potential to advance Wisconsin's efforts to become a true leader in the production of renewable energy. The proposal, incorporated in companion Senate and Assembly legislation, would support energy conservation and establish a defined path toward achieving specific conservation goals.

"Achieving the vision set forth in the Clean Energy Jobs Act will require diligence and innovative thinking," said Scott VanderSanden, chairman of the Wisconsin Business Council and president of AT&T Wisconsin. "But we are confident that Wisconsin leaders in manufacturing, energy production, trade and service industries are up to this challenge. We look forward to the public discussion and the give and take that will be part of the legislative effort to fine-tune this proposal."

"The Clean Energy Jobs Act sets the stage for the creation of thousands of well-paying, family-sustaining 'green jobs' over the next decade, and if implemented in a way that recognizes the needs of our key industries, it will enhance Wisconsin's business climate," VanderSanden said.

Members of the Wisconsin Business Council look forward to working with the Legislature to ensure that the proposal makes Wisconsin greener and more economically vibrant, while at the same time allowing the state's manufacturing and energy generation industries to continue competing globally.

"We encourage members of both parties as well as business and environmental advocacy groups to continue the discussion and participate in the process," VanderSanden said.

Organized in June 2009, members of the Wisconsin Business Council recognize that better jobs and a stronger economy are critical to Wisconsin's quality of life. With leadership from companies including American Transmission Co., Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, AT&T Wisconsin, Commerce State Bank,

Dean Health System, Midwest Natural Gas, MillerCoors, Mortenson Construction, Orion Energy Systems and Park Bank, the Wisconsin Business Council intends to work with citizens, elected officials and policy-makers. The goal? To develop a pro-business, pro-employment agenda that makes Wisconsin a better place to start a business, expand a corporation and find exceptional investment opportunities.

Phil Prange, president and chief executive officer of the Wisconsin Business Council, said efforts to accelerate Wisconsin's green economy ultimately will make the state a better place to raise a family, get an education, recreate and retire.

"The Wisconsin Business Council was established to provide a forum for business leaders to come together in the search for mutually beneficial solutions and we're cautiously optimistic about the potential of the Clean Energy Jobs Act," Prange said. "A flourishing private sector is critical to our quality of life and it is clear that environmental innovation also makes sense from a competitive standpoint."

Wisconsin Business Council Members including Orion Energy Systems, Johnson Timber Corp. and American Transmission Corp. are among leaders in providing global industrial solutions that conserve energy, utilize alternative fuels and offer sustainable options.

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