



705 Olive Street, Suite 614, St. Louis, MO 63101-2208

Telephone (314) 231-4181, facsimile (314) 231-4184

www.greatriverslaw.org

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For More Information Contact:

Henry Robertson
Great Rivers Environmental Law Center
(314) 231-4181
hrobertson@greatriverslaw.org

PJ Wilson
Missourians for Clean and Safe Energy
(417) 459-7468, fax (310)359-0251
pj@renewmo.org

Citizens File Petition for Clean Energy Requirement

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Missourians for Clean and Safe Energy have submitted an initiative to the Missouri Secretary of State, which will require Missouri electric utilities to increase their use of renewable sources of energy, like solar panels and wind turbines, gradually over the coming years, reaching up to 20% of their electricity sales by 2020.

Missourians will be able to vote on the Clean Energy Requirement during this November's election if it gets enough signatures of registered Missouri voters before May 4th.

"Twenty-four states have already tried renewable energy standards in some form, and they work," said Henry Robertson of Great Rivers, which assisted in drafting the measure. "Missouri still gets 85% of its electricity from burning coal, and less than 2% from renewables. Renewable electricity, along with energy conservation and efficiency, is the answer to the pollution and global heating caused by fossil fuels."

"Missouri imports one hundred percent of its coal at a cost of over nine billion dollars a year. Shifting to renewables keeps this money in Missouri, creating jobs and businesses and helping our local economy," said PJ Wilson, spokesperson for Missourians for Clean and Safe Energy.

Wilson continued, "Renewable resources like wind and solar are less costly in the long run, and actually help stabilize our electric rates. All other states that have passed such measures have seen little or no impact on their electric bills – they've just enjoyed cleaner, safer energy, more energy independence and energy security, and more freedom from out-of-state and foreign sources of fossil fuels."

The initiative could result in lower utility bills, and it includes a stop-gap measure that guarantees rates could not be raised by more than 1%.

Great Rivers is a nonprofit public interest environmental law firm in St. Louis that provides free legal services to those working to promote preservation of open space, clean energy, clean air and clean water. Its web address is: www.greatriverslaw.org.