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PennFuture: Clean Energy/Green Jobs legislation will create nearly 130,000 new jobs, save consumers at least \$1.9 billion

Harrisburg, PA (February 3, 2010) –Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture) held a press conference today to highlight the recent study by global engineering, consulting, and construction firm Black & Veatch, which showed passage of the Clean Energy and Green Jobs legislation (HB 80 and SB 92) will lead to nearly 130,000 new jobs and save between \$1.9 and \$4.6 billion for Pennsylvania consumers. The study was released earlier this week, and was commissioned by the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies and supported by The Heinz Endowments and the William Penn Foundation.

“This study proves that the Clean Energy and Green Jobs legislation makes cents – at least 190 billion cents, to be exact,” said Jan Jarrett, president and CEO of PennFuture. “Passing this legislation would mean we are saying yes to new jobs, yes to billions in investment, and yes to billions in savings to our state's families and businesses. And saying no would mean we are willing to watch all those benefits go elsewhere.

“The legislation before the Pennsylvania General Assembly builds on the 2004 Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard (AEPS), which has been a terrific success in producing our 21st Century economy,” continued Jarrett. “Thanks to the investments spurred by the law, we have created 3,000 clean energy businesses employing 40,000 people; stimulated new renewable energy manufacturing; and we have 40 companies making components just for the wind energy industry. We have wind farms all across the state and solar power in every corner. We have shown terrific leadership in our clean and green market.

“But we are in danger of losing that lead, and having the money and jobs go elsewhere, unless we pass the Clean Energy and Green Jobs legislation,” said Jarrett. “Our neighboring states are adopting renewable energy standards that are larger than our current requirements, and the investments will follow. It's time for the Pennsylvania General Assembly to pass this legislation, and take advantage of the jobs and money it will bring.”

The Clean Energy and Green Jobs legislation builds on the AEPS which requires that Pennsylvania's electricity suppliers provide 8 percent from renewable resources and 10 percent from alternative resources by 2021. The new legislation would increase the renewable part of the law from 8 to 15 percent by 2026, with a 3 percent requirement for solar energy. The proposed bill also requires an additional 3 percent requirement (from the second alternative resource tier) from existing coal-fired power plants which capture and store the carbon pollution they create.

The Black & Veatch study (available for download at <http://www.pennfuture.org/energy.aspx>) analyzed the economic impact of the 2004 law, the availability of renewable energy to meet any requirements, and the economic impact of passing the proposed law. Among other findings, the analysis shows that Pennsylvania theoretically has enough long term renewable energy potential to satisfy its entire electrical power needs – nearly seven times the 2007 retail load. The study also found that expanding our AEPS requirement would result in lower electricity costs generally; using fuel-free electricity, like solar and wind, will decrease fossil fuel prices through decreased demand, provide a hedge against price increases for fuel prices, and suppress the overall prices for electricity, especially wholesale market prices.

Jarrett was joined at the press conference by Ryan Pletka, director of renewable energy strategic planning services at Black & Veatch; Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Secretary John Hanger; and State Representatives Greg Vitali (D-Delaware) and Thomas Houghton (D-Chester).