

Adopted Sept. 11, 2012

Resolution: Renewable and Clean Energy

Whereas, renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, geothermal and biomass represent an important source of electricity, can avoid or reduce harmful air emissions, and are a key element in ensuring long-term North American energy security and reliability; and,

Whereas, states have developed Renewable and Clean Energy Portfolio Standards to advance regional economic development, energy security and environmental goals, such as reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, in a way that is cost-effective; and

Whereas, the federal production tax credit (PTC) complements state policies by providing a tax credit for the first 10 years of a renewable energy facility's operation; and

Whereas, the PTC, originally enacted as part of the Energy Policy Act of 1992, expired on three separate occasions between 1999 and 2004, and is set to expire on Dec. 31, 2012; and

Whereas, the PTC has been a major driver of renewable energy development over the past decade and is a critical federal policy incentive to produce new jobs and develop clean energy sources that benefit the Great Lakes region; and

Whereas, states have developed strong partnerships with regional entities, including those in Canada, to achieve their renewable energy goals, and several northern-border states currently recognize hydroelectric power – including that imported from Canada – in their renewable energy/portfolio standards; and,

Whereas, the member states and provinces of the Great Lakes Commission understand that issues concerning the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin are best addressed through the binational, collaborative approach of organizations like the Commission; and,

Whereas, that this understanding between the member states and provinces of the Commission embraces notably the sustainable management of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River water system, but also other dimensions of sustainable development, such as renewable energy, which constitute both an environmental and an economic asset for our region; and

Whereas, legislation has been proposed in the U.S. Senate that would create a federal Clean Energy Standard which may not recognize, protect and respect the rights of states to develop their own renewable energy policies and resources.

Therefore Be It Resolved, the Great Lakes Commission urges federal policymakers to respect and support existing state Renewable and Clean Energy Portfolio Standards in place, as well as the regional partnerships that have been developed, and that state policies respecting renewable energy or hydropower usage, whether domestic or from Canada, should not be federally pre-empted; and

Be It Further Resolved, the Great Lakes Commission urges Congress to support extension of the Production Tax Credit and energy efficiency measures beyond 2012; and

Be It Finally Resolved, this resolution shall be submitted to appropriate state/provincial and federal officials.