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DES MOINES - State officials released their 2011 energy independence plan Wednesday that places a heavy emphasis on bio-fuels, pushes for more wind generation and promotes the concept of businesses using "work hubs" to reduce vehicle travel miles

The annual plan issued by the state Office of Energy Independence contains 18 recommendations relating to energy efficiency, renewable energy and bio-fuels to chart the course for Iowa's energy future, noting that Iowa leads the nation in bio-fuels output by producing 30 percent of U.S. ethanol and 15 percent of bio-diesel. The report indicates bio-fuels output adds nearly \$12 billion to Iowa's gross state product and generates \$576 million in state tax revenue annually.

Also included in the report is a statement from Gov. Chet Culver and Lt. Gov. Patty Judge that Iowa's commitment and collaboration in moving the state's energy industry forward has created an energy "buzz" sparking local and national attention. They also say the Iowa Power Fund has played a critical role in helping to achieve the state's vision of energy independence.

"By fostering ideas and investing in innovative projects, we have essentially transformed the entire state into a laboratory for driving cutting-edge research and development of technologies that will advance renewable energy in Iowa," Culver and Judge said in a joint release. "These projects capitalize on Iowa's many abundant resources, have created over 2,300 jobs and will establish long-term economic and environmental benefits that will last well into the future."

That message was contrasted with statements by Iowa Republicans who emerged victorious in the 2010 election that the Iowa Power Fund's days are likely numbered and the Office of Energy Independence might be on the chopping blocks as the new 60-member GOP majority in the Iowa House looks to reduce the size of state government and cut spending in a number of areas to achieve up to \$300 million in savings yet this fiscal year.

Among the targets outlined in the 2011 energy independence plans are goals to achieve by the year 2025 to decrease vehicle miles traveled in Iowa by 10 percent, to increase wind generation in Iowa to 10,000 mega-watts or more, and to increase use of bio-fuels in Iowa and nationally by 50 percent.

The plan calls for Iowa employers and individuals to embrace a "work hub" concept that would cut down on commuting by using alternative work practices and locations - homes, an Iowa Communication Network center, wireless hot spots or other places - equipped with appropriate telecommunications technology to provide an environment for normal business activities.

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