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Business

## States team up for cheaper renewable energy

By **Luther Turmelle**, *New Haven Register*

POSTED: 02/27/15, 7:49 PM EST

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Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island are teaming up in an effort to procure renewable energy more cheaply.

Officials from the three states announced a plan earlier this week to jointly issue a request for proposals. The first step in that process, according to Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection spokesman Dennis Schain, is the release of a draft request for proposals.

That was done Wednesday and the period for comment of the draft proposal will end March 26, he said. After reviewing the comments, Schain said the three states will issue the final request for proposals this spring.

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy called the request for proposals process “the way we can make the most

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efficient use of our resources to attract new clean energy projects at the lowest possible cost for ratepayers while advancing our interests in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases,”



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“The joint procurement process opens the possibility of procuring large-scale projects and transmission to deliver clean energy on a scale that no single state could secure on its own,” Malloy said in a statement.

Other goals include diversifying the fuel mix in New England and helping to address winter reliability issues, according to Schain.

Bill Dornbos, senior attorney with the Acadia Center and director of the environmental group’s Connecticut office, said the request for proposals is coming from the three New England states with the largest demand for electricity. A request for proposals is a competitive bidding process conducted by electric utilities, in coordination with their respective state agencies, seeking plans from electric suppliers on how they would meet need for renewable resources such as wind, solar, and other non-carbon emitting sources.

“They (the states) are significant consumers of energy and so they have a lot of bargaining power,” Dornbos said. “I think it is a smart strategy. Whoever wins the competition is going to have fairly cost



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effective pricing.”

Dornbos said officials with Acadia Center will review the draft request for proposals carefully.

“There’s a lot of details that need to be worked out,” he said. “We need to see what costs will or will not be have to be included in the contract.”

Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker. as part of the collaborative procurement process, and the governors “also discussed the growing need for regional cooperation in pursuing natural gas expansion.”

Connecticut lawmakers gave Malloy the authority to enter into joint efforts like this one in 2013.

The request for proposals will seek projects that use wind, solar, small hydro, biomass and fuel cells and produce at least 20 megawatts. Proposals for large-scale hydro power projects that were constructed after January 1, 2003, also will be considered.

The request for proposals also invites bids for projects that deliver to Connecticut clean energy over new or existing transmission lines that is the equivalent of 500 megawatts of wind power.

Call Luther Turmelle at 203-680-9388.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Follow Luther on Twitter: [@LutherTurmelle](#).

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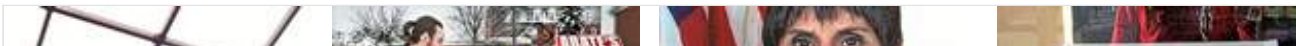
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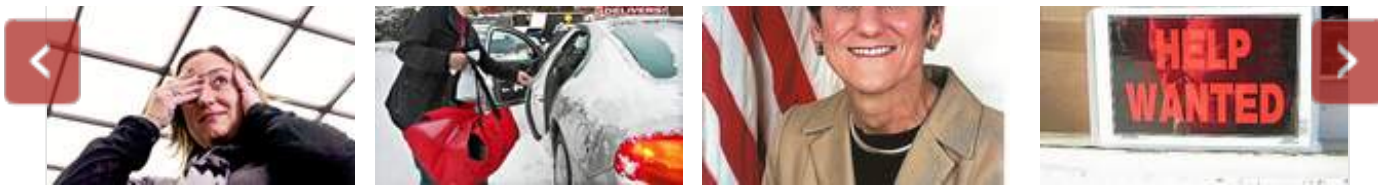
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