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### RMCO Applauds Passage of Clean-Energy Bill

The Rocky Mountain Climate Organization (RMCO) applauds the final passage today by the Colorado General Assembly of House Bill 10-1001, strengthening the requirements for how much clean energy sources must be used by investor-owned utilities in producing electricity.

“This is the most important bill this year to reduce Colorado’s contribution to human-caused climate disruption,” said Stephen Saunders, the president of RMCO.

HB 10-1001 largely implements a key recommendation of the blue-ribbon Climate Action Panel that RMCO convened in 2006 to recommend ways to reduce our state’s contributions and vulnerabilities to climate change. Governor Ritter adopted as state policy the emission-reduction goals recommended by the Climate Action Panel in its 2007 report. HB 10-1001 implements, with respect to the state’s two investor-owned utilities, the panel’s recommendation for a 50% strengthening of the state’s renewable portfolio standard (RPS). Under the bill, those utilities would have to use clean sources to produce 30% of their electricity by 2020, rather than 20% as under current law.

The RPS-strengthening recommendation was approved by the 34-member Climate Action Panel by a super-majority vote, with only three dissents. A representative of Xcel Energy served on the panel and participated in shaping the panel’s recommendation. The support of Xcel was crucial to the passage of HB 10-1001.

Analysis done for the Climate Action Panel indicated that a 50% strengthening of the RPS for all utilities (not just investor-owned utilities) would achieve an estimated 9 percent of the emission reductions needed to meet the state’s climate-protection goal for 2020. That goal, as recommended by the panel and adopted by the governor, is that emissions in the state of heat-trapping gases be reduced by 20% compared to 2005 levels. That goal represents a 37% overall reduction in emissions of heat-trapping gases compared to the 2020 level expected under current law.

For all utilities, the costs of achieving the strengthened RPS were estimated to be \$16 per ton of carbon dioxide avoided. The analysis done for the Panel also suggested that utilities complying with the strengthened RPS would not build any more new coal-fired power plants in the state before 2020 and would instead meet their new energy supply needs through a combination of clean sources and demand-reduction measures.

The Climate Action Panel recommendation addressed Colorado's two investor-owned utilities, Xcel Energy and Black Hills Corporation, which supply about 60% of the electricity used in Colorado, and also municipal and cooperative utilities. The bill given final passage today by the Colorado General Assembly addresses only the state's two investor-owned utilities. RMCO continues to support a 50% strengthening of the RPS for other utilities, from the current 10% clean-energy requirement for them to 15%, as recommended by the panel.

The full analysis on which the Climate Action Panel relied, its reasoning, and its votes are spelled out in the Panel's report, at [www.coloradoclimate.org](http://www.coloradoclimate.org).

RMCO testified in the House and Senate in support of HR 10-1001. RMCO is a mainstream coalition with 26 partner organizations, including 14 local governments; Denver Water, Colorado's largest water provider; 5 businesses; and 6 nonprofit organizations. We work to keep the West a special place by reducing climate disruption and its effects here.

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