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Clean Energy Advocates Urge Governor Schwarzenegger to Protect Legacy by Signing Crucial Legislation to Prevent Rollback of Climate Rules

LOS ANGELES – Clean energy advocates today urged Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to sign legislation to increase California's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) to 33%. These bills would protect his legacy by setting the new goal into law, preventing it from being overturned by a legal challenge or a future governor at the stroke of a pen.

"Our state has been a leader in fighting global warming," said Sierra Club California Senior Advocate Jim Metropulos. "These laws are the cornerstone of those efforts. Without permanent protection, the work Governor Schwarzenegger has done to make California a leader in the clean energy economy could be derailed."

Governor Schwarzenegger's leadership made California's climate change action possible, and he has called for raising California's RPS to 33% by 2020, issuing executive orders to create rules using AB32. In 2002, California passed a law establishing RPS, mandating that 20% of the state's electricity be generated from renewable resources by 2010, followed by AB32, legislation creating the world's first comprehensive framework of rules to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

However, "If all we have is an executive order, then the RPS program could be brought to an abrupt halt by a future governor... Governor Schwarzenegger's vision of California as a global leader in renewable energy development may never be realized," said Peter Miller, Senior Scientist, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

"Renewable energy developers need the long-term market certainty that SB14 and AB64 provide," said Faramarz Nabavi, Deputy Director, California Wind Energy Association (CalWEA). "Current laws prohibit the state to issue rules for a RPS above 20%. That's why we need the new laws: an administrative order to raise the RPS under AB32 alone could easily be overturned by a new governor or the courts."

"In order to prevent catastrophic climate disruption, we have to reduce our carbon emissions by 80%," said Metropulos. "With increasing wildfires and melting glaciers, we can't afford further delays."

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