

**Talking Points for IRA Leighton**  
**Strategic Planning Retreat – Energy Efficiency**  
**April 27, 2007**

Welcome and thanks to everyone for coming today.

I want acknowledge first all of those who worked very hard over the last several months to bring this event together, including:

- EPA staff [Bill White, Lucy Edmondson, John Moskal, Norm Willard, Dave Conroy from EPA NE, and Sue Gander from Washington]
- Chris James of CT DEP
- Jonathan Raab of Raab Associates
- Rich Sedano and Rich Cowart of the Regulatory Assistance Project
- and Bill Leahy of the Institute for Sustainable Energy here at Eastern Connecticut State University for both his input and for graciously hosting today's event.

I also want to thank our great federal partners at the Department of Energy, represented here today by Dan Buckley.

I know we have a full day ahead of us, so I just want to take a few minutes to talk about why EPA convened today's meeting on energy efficiency in New England.

For many years now, EPA has recognized the critical importance of energy production and use to our economy and our ability to achieve our environmental goals – especially here in New England.

Energy is one of EPA Administrator Steve Johnson's four top priorities.

New England Regional Administrator Bob Varney created an Energy Team in 2001 to focus on these issues – the first such group in the country.

The reasons why energy is such a high priority at EPA are simple and well known, but worth repeating.

Energy used in our homes and businesses is a major source of the air pollution that contributes to smog, soot, acid rain, as well as the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change.

- Earlier this week, with the return of summer-like weather, we also saw the return of unhealthy air quality levels in New England. These elevated levels occurred both in central Massachusetts and in Maine.
- Given the correlation between hotter weather, increased demand for energy to cool buildings, and unhealthy air quality, the Ozone Transport Commission has begun looking closely at energy efficiency as a strategy for reducing air pollution on high energy demand days. The opportunities for progress here are enormous.

At the same time, reliable and affordable energy is the lifeblood of our economy.

Here in New England, we are extremely fortunate to have state governments, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and citizens who recognize these dual challenges and who have demonstrated tremendous leadership and innovation in addressing them.

We've successfully worked together in recent years on a wide range of energy issues:

- Building a new generation of clean power plants
- Promoting clean and renewable energy resources
- And advancing environmentally responsible demand response efforts.

Despite our past successes, we still face many energy-related challenges in New England.

- Rising energy demand continues to create concerns about reliability
- Our energy prices remain among the highest in the nation
- And significant environmental challenges remain – none more important than global climate change.

At EPA, one thing we're concluding from these challenges is this: there's never been a better time than right now for bold action on energy efficiency.

Energy efficiency is the one strategy that simultaneously addresses all of our concerns: it cuts emissions, improves reliability, and lowers costs.

New England has long been a national leader on energy efficiency and we've had great success over many years.

Despite this success, we all know that there is tremendous untapped potential for even greater advances in energy efficiency.

- A 2005 analysis by Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships – the so-called NEEP Report - estimated that here in New England, economically achievable energy efficiency could bring New England's energy demand down to 1993 levels by 2013 – almost 30% below business as usual.

- EPA's Energy Star program estimates, that on average, 30% of the energy used in commercial and institutional buildings is wasted.
- And, last year, the National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency saw a very broad leadership group, including: federal, state, and local agencies, utilities, generators, grid operators, businesses, and environmental groups and others, endorse energy efficiency as a high priority energy resource.

We want to use today as the first step in a process to take energy efficiency efforts in New England to a new level that is consistent with challenges we face, the opportunity we have, and our tradition of leading the way on this issue.

In short, think big, aim high, bring your "A" game – you get the picture.

We will work with all of you to set and meet an ambitious goal for energy efficiency in New England – whatever form it takes.

Thank you, and I look forward to working with all of you.