



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release:**  
June 14, 2007

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### **NEVADA LEGISLATURE PASSES MAJOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY POLICIES Governor Signs Bills**

*(Carson City, NV)* – The Nevada Legislature ended its biennial session with three major energy efficiency successes under its belt. “AB 178, AB 621 and SB 437 move Nevada further down the path to energy independence,” stated Howard Geller, Executive Director of the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP). “Provisions in these bills will save consumers and businesses in Nevada over \$1 billion while reducing pollutant emissions and the need for costly and controversial new power plants.”

Governor Jim Gibbons signed the bills into law on June 14 and 15, 2007.

**AB 621** was the highest visibility energy bill this session as legislators scrambled to contain the property tax loss to local governments created by tax incentives for green buildings enacted in 2005. AB 621 reduces the amount of the tax incentive for future projects and adds a minimum energy efficiency component to the current Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) requirement. It also streamlines the process for developers and provides greater control by the Governor's Energy Office.

“SWEEP applauds the Nevada Legislature for finding a way to increase tax revenues to school districts and county agencies while maintaining a meaningful incentive for transforming building practices in Nevada,” said Steve Wiel, SWEEP's Nevada Representative. “The economic and environmental benefits to Nevadans from this initiative are huge.”

**AB 178** includes a minimum energy efficiency standard of 25 lumens per watt for general-purpose light bulbs sold in this State starting January 1, 2012. It also requires the Director of the Office of Energy to establish a minimum energy efficiency standard greater than 25 lumens per watt for general-purpose lights sold in this State after January 1, 2016. This provision, proposed by Senator Michael Schneider and accepted into AB 178 by Assemblyman David Bobzien, effectively bans today's general service incandescent bulbs. Consumers will only be able to purchase efficient light sources such as compact fluorescent lamps, LEDs, or improved incandescent lamps once this provision takes effect.

Nevada joins a growing number of organizations around the world that are phasing out inefficient incandescent light bulbs. “Nevada is the first state in the U.S. to pass such legislation and we applaud this pioneering action,” Wiel added. SWEEP estimates that the lighting standard

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will save consumers in Nevada \$1.3 billion after all the old bulbs have burnt out and been replaced with new efficient ones. SWEEP also estimates the standard will eventually reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 850,000 tons per year -- the equivalent of removing 160,000 passenger cars from the road.

**SB 437** contains two provisions that will significantly enhance energy efficiency in Nevada. One directs the Public Utility Commission to remove disincentives that currently inhibit natural gas utilities from helping customers use gas more efficiently. Another provision requires the seller of a home to provide the buyer with a home energy evaluation. "Removing regulatory barriers to utility energy efficiency programs and providing consumers with better information regarding energy opportunities are important policies for cutting energy waste," Wiel noted.

SWEEP congratulates all of Nevada's legislators for passing AB 178, AB 621, and SB 437 with only one dissenting vote among all three bills, and Governor Gibbons for signing them into law. For further details regarding these bills, see [www.swenergy.org/legislative/2007/nevada/index.html](http://www.swenergy.org/legislative/2007/nevada/index.html).

**About SWEEP:** The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) is a public interest organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency in six southwest states. See [www.swenergy.org](http://www.swenergy.org).

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