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Contact: Mary Mastin:
931.268.2938, cell 931.268.2938

ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS SEEK 25% RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION FROM TVA BY 2020 Cite Improvements for Economy, Natural Resources and Citizen Health

CHATTANOOGA, TN: A letter endorsed by regional environmental organizations representing 15,000 members was delivered today to TVA Board of Directors and CEO Kilgore by Attorney Mary Mastin. The letter asks the TVA Board first to set a goal of 20 to 25% of its generation by 2020 or 2025 to be from renewable energy.

“The new energy economy is the single best economic engine we have to create jobs and drive ourselves out of the current recession. Solar is a key component of that new energy economy, with over 6000 solar jobs already in TN and more on the way with Sharp, Hemlock, and Wacker investing in TN solar manufacturing jobs,” maintains Dr. John McFadden, Executive Director of TN Environmental Council.

Additional requests in the letter asked TVA to

- 2) reconsider its recent decisions to cut back its support for incentives in solar energy;
- 3) discontinue the link between the Green Power Switch program and the renewable incentive program(s) so that the Green Power Switch no longer acts as a cap to renewable energy incentives;
- 4) engage in a robust outreach program for Valley citizens and businesses to learn about its renewable energy programs; and
- 5) utilize its regulatory authority over its distributors to require uniform application of its incentives programs for renewable energy.

The letter also points out that TVA is approaching their Congressional statutory debt ceiling. The letter states: *Recent decisions to fund construction costs at*

Bellefonte and Watts Bar 2 by intricate sale and lease leaseback financing threaten the solid financial footing and credit rating that TVA has maintained for decades.

The endorsing groups believe that if TVA did fully commit to developing and achieving greater levels of renewable energy and efficiency, no other new sources of energy generation including nuclear would be necessary and TVA could also further reduce its reliance on dirty and inefficient coal plants.

The letter was accompanied by a petition presented by TEC's McFadden during the TVA Board meeting. It was signed by hundreds of citizens expressing their concern about TVA's recent decisions to cut back on the size of solar installations in the Generation Partners Program.

“ We ask the TVA to implement Sustainable-Renewable Energy technology,” states Garry Morgan, member of Bellefonte & Efficiency Sustainability Team (BEST/MATRR). “In our letter we list 7 advantages of renewable energy over nuclear and coal power generation options,” says Morgan. “Energy Efficiency and Sustainable-Renewable energy technology saves money for citizens and business while energy efficiency generates local jobs for citizens and serves to expand business by saving money and by creating new job growth locally,” he continues.

One of those seven advantages of renewable energy to which Morgan refers is related to coal mining: *Renewables don't require us to use destructive extraction methods such as mountaintop removal coal mining. Surface mining in Central Appalachia has been linked with job loss, poverty, sickness, and early death in mountain communities.*

According to J.W. Randolph, Tennessee Director for *Appalachian Voices*, “Mountaintop removal means fewer jobs, higher healthcare costs, damaged property values, and the destruction of Tennessee and Appalachia's proud mountains forever. TVA produces less than 2% of their electricity from mountaintop removal coal. On behalf of Appalachian citizens' health and economic well-being TVA should become the first major utility in the country to step away from the use of mountaintop removal coal.”

The letter lists several other advantages of renewables:

- *Unlike nuclear or fossil fuels, wind and solar have no fuel costs. Citizens invest in the purchase and installation of photovoltaic panels for their homes or businesses with their own money. Minimal incentives from TVA and/or the government increases TVA's power generation capacity without*

the huge cost and need for financing of new nuclear power plant construction.

- *Savings in transmission lines - Solar power from our own rooftops supplements electricity from big power plants, which has to be transported across long distances with line losses and therefore is more expensive when it comes out of the socket. Traditional fossil fuel sources of energy also require spending massive amounts for grid repair and expansion.*
- *The record is clear that solar energy equipment production and installation have produced many new green jobs in Tennessee over the past few years.*
- *The sun and wind are infinite sustainable energy sources compared to the finite availability of coal or uranium for nuclear production.*
- *Storage of radioactive waste from nuclear generation for up to a million years, or for coal ash from coal-fired power plants, is very costly (\$1 million each for dry casks to hold spent fuel) and poses huge environmental risks. In the event of a serious incident, as we have seen with Kingston- or Fukushima - the damage can escalate to catastrophic proportions.*
- *Both solar and wind are much cleaner energy sources in terms of both air emissions and water discharges. The lack of need for cooling water is also a huge advantage. As TVA must recognize, clean water is becoming a more and more important and rare resource.*

Groups who have endorsed the letter are Tennessee Environmental Council, the Tennessee and Cumberland (Kentucky) Chapters of the Sierra Club, Tennessee Clean Water Network, Tennessee Alliance for Progress, Appalachian Voices, BEST/MATRR, Urban Century Institute, and Solar Valley Coalition.

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