



Introducing... Pennsylvania's new energy executive

Pat Henderson will play key role in advancing sound energy policy



Governor Tom Corbett named Pat Henderson Pennsylvania's first energy executive. Catalyst interviewed the former executive director of the Senate Environmental

Resources and Energy Committee about his new role.

Catalyst: Tell us about your background

I graduated from Bloomsburg University in 1996. Prior to my appointment by the governor, I worked 14 years for state Sen. Mary Jo White, R-Venango, with the last 12 years serving as executive director of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. In that role, I helped craft laws such as Growing Greener, the Water Resources Planning Act, the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act and the Mine Safety Act.

Catalyst: Tell us about the role of the state's new energy executive

Governor Corbett made clear during his campaign that reliable and affordable energy, from a diverse portfolio of sources, is critical to Pennsylvania's economic prosperity. Energy policy transcends state agencies and impacts our economy in numerous ways. By designating a member of his administration to serve as energy executive, the governor has signaled the priority he places on energy

and his commitment to ensure that his administration advances sound and practical energy policy. Communication and coordination among various state agencies and with stakeholders on energy policy and ensuring that they meet with the governor's vision are key responsibilities of this position.

Catalyst: What are your immediate priorities as energy executive?

One of the first priorities is participating in a review of existing policies and regulations that affect energy to determine if they are consistent with the governor's vision. Additionally, meeting with various stakeholders to understand the challenges they are facing and the recommendations they have—and what we can do to help—will be critical to better positioning Pennsylvania as an energy leader.

Catalyst: What should a sound energy policy for the Commonwealth entail?

Governor Corbett has stressed that a key to any strong energy policy is the diversity of our portfolio. Pennsylvania is a resource-rich state; we have the opportunity to not only compete with other states for jobs, but to win the competition, and help improve the quality of life in Pennsylvania. A sound energy policy will convey to our citizens and employers that Pennsylvania understands this and is ready to lead.

Catalyst: What role does alternative energy have in an overall energy policy?

Alternative and renewable energy sources are critical to the diversity necessary for a sound energy policy. Wind, solar, hydropower, biomass, waste coal and other renewable and alternative energy sources are significant contributors to our energy portfolio in Pennsylvania, and will continue to be into the future. The state's electric competition act encourages consumers to choose their electric suppliers, and we need to encourage consumers to make choices that meet their needs and their priorities.

jobs, attract outside capital investment, provide needed financial opportunities for landowners and truly move us toward energy independence. We have a tremendous economic and clean energy opportunity before us—along with an obligation to develop the resource in a responsible and environmentally safe manner.

Catalyst: What do you feel will be the state's most pressing energy concerns moving forward?

The most pressing concern we face is ensuring that Pennsylvania's citizens and employers have access to both affordable

Catalyst: Are there any specific misconceptions about energy/energy policy that you'd like to address?

To have a smart energy policy, we need to understand the basics: where it comes from, how we get energy to those who need it, and how our choices impact it. Expanding our understanding of energy will lead to increased efficiency and appreciation of how energy impacts our lives every day.

Catalyst: How will your office work with industry, the legislature, environmental groups? What will be the nature of those relationships?

The nature of relationships with the public, legislature, industry and environmental groups will be one of accessibility and transparency, reflective of the governor's vision for smart and effective policy making. No one group has a monopoly on good ideas, and we all have an interest in making sure that Pennsylvania succeeds. ◆

“ Pennsylvania is blessed to sit atop of a resource that is helping to create and retain jobs, attract outside capital investment, provide needed financial opportunities for landowners, and truly move us toward energy independence. ”

■ **Pat Henderson** on the role of the Marcellus Shale industry in the state's energy policy

Catalyst: What role does the Marcellus Shale industry have in overall energy policy?

The Marcellus Shale natural gas play is the opportunity of a lifetime. It is a cornerstone of the Commonwealth's economic recovery. Pennsylvania is blessed to sit atop of a resource that is helping to create and retain

and reliable energy sources. We need to ensure that the regulatory standards in place are practical, protective of our citizens' health and safety, respect the environment and encourage the development of our indigenous energy resources. We must also develop the physical infrastructure necessary to get energy from those who produce it to those who need it.