



Lifestyles: Peruse the archives of cool for your favorite hero, 5B



IB

MONDAY

March 14, 2005

UTC.AOD.COM

Hevesi: Renewable energy could spark 43,000 jobs

Comptroller's report in step with Pataki's goals

By MICHAEL GORMLEY
The Associated Press

ALBANY — New York's rust belt could yield a greener economy that produces and consumes more renewable energy from soybeans to hydrogen, according to an economic report released by state Comptroller Alan Hevesi.

The report said thousands more jobs would be created in manufacturing and energy related industries if New York steps up its commitment to generating more electricity through renewable sources. The report is the latest to call for New York to expand solar, wind and hydro power, as well as develop crops including corn and soybeans that can be processed into fuel.

Hevesi said 43,000 jobs would be created if, by 2013, the state increased to 25 percent the share of electricity used in New York through nontraditional, renewable resources. That commitment, he said, would spawn new businesses to provide the raw materials for the nontraditional fuel.

Renewable resources now account for about 20 percent of the state's electricity use, he said. There are about 170 companies in the state in the renewable energy industry now, but that could quickly expand, particularly in Albany, Syracuse, Rochester and Long Island, because of the state's electricity use, he said.

university research is already under way there, he said. "The Pataki administration has set a strong goal for increasing our use of renewable energy," said Hevesi a Democrat. "We now need to make the necessary changes to reach that goal to both help the environment and add thousands of high-wage, high-skill jobs to the New York economy," including manufacturing jobs."

Republican Gov. George Pataki has been calling for a greater state commitment to "renewable bio-fuels." He noted that the Syracuse School of Environmental Science and Forestry is developing a way to produce ethanol fuel from wood fiber and Clarkson University is building refineries to make "bio-diesel" from agricultural products. He has ordered state agencies to start using bio-fuels to heat state buildings and as truck fuel. He also directed an agency to install hydrogen refueling stations for state vehicles over the next 10 years.

"As we look even further in the future," Pataki said in his January State of the State address to the Legislature, "let's prepare for a time when the only exhaust emitted from our automobiles will be clean water."

Republican state Sen. Carl Marcellino, chairman of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, said recent laws he sponsored and Pataki's proposals have growing support in the public — angry at rising petroleum prices — and in the Legislature. He welcomed Hevesi's report but said he believes the Legislature is already on track to a greater commitment to renewable energy.