

2011 MGA Chair's Agenda

Advancing the Midwest's New Energy Economy Through Investment, Innovation and International Trade

To ensure the Midwest's role as an economic leader at home and abroad, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn and the Midwestern Governors Association will seek to capitalize on the Midwest's strategic advantages in new energy, manufacturing and biotechnology. The Midwest has the resources to make it an even stronger competitor in the global marketplace: world-class wind potential, vast coal reserves, more than five billion barrels of untapped oil, a large share of the nation's biomass, and emerging industrial clusters in areas ranging from solar panels and fuel cells to advanced batteries and heat recovery technologies. Paired with a skilled and hard-working labor force, the Midwest is poised to be a leader in new energy and bioeconomy, resulting in accelerated economic growth and job creation.

In 2011, the MGA will build on its Energy, Jobs and Investment Platforms by focusing on areas of collaboration that cross state boundaries and increase knowledge of and access to Midwestern goods and services. To advance this agenda, Governor Quinn is asking his fellow Midwestern governors to join with him in focusing on the following three areas:

Increasing Financial and Human Capital. Financing is critical to expanding new energy industries in the Midwest, and investors want to explore opportunities across the region as a whole. States can promote the strengths of the Midwest's strong business climate by adopting a regional approach. For example, mapping labor market information will help investors in the United States and around the world pinpoint new areas of opportunity in the Midwest. A multi-state, collaborative effort to drive investment through innovative economic development policies will continue the work of the MGA to enhance the region's global position while developing the strongest local labor pool in the United States.

Advancing Innovative Technologies. The Midwest's natural assets, global corporations and intellectual capital make the region the biotechnology hub of the nation. We must ensure that the Midwest remains the leader in developing cutting-edge and new energy technology solutions by fostering growth through regional cooperation and the sharing of best practices. Examples include new approaches to industrial energy efficiency and efficiency financing, building a smarter electric grid, improving the business environment and infrastructure for enhanced oil recovery, and bringing the next generation of biofuels and other advanced transportation methods to commercial scale. The region will be more competitive if Midwestern states work together on these and other job-creating technology platforms.

Increasing Midwestern Exports. As the MGA works to increase financial and human capital and advance innovative technologies, the association must also work together to increase Midwestern products and services. By leading a delegation of business and government leaders on a trade mission, MGA governors will show that the region is ready and willing to break down trade barriers, advance joint technology development, attract foreign direct investment and seek out new markets for Midwest goods and services.