

NEWS



4301 WILSON BLVD. • ARLINGTON, VA 22203-1860 • TEL: 703.907.5500 • WWW.NRECA.COOP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NRECA CEO GLENN ENGLISH
ADDRESSES CO-OP LEADERSHIP AT 66TH
ANNUAL MEETING**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**Patrick Lavigne, NRECA Communications
703-851-0618 (Feb. 22-27, 2008)**

Anaheim, Calif., February 26, 2008 –Invoking the successful public-private partnerships of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the legacy of the “New Deal,” Glenn English, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, called on government to work with consumers to achieve national climate change goals. “In the 1930s, when Roosevelt initiated the ‘New Deal’ the president didn’t say: You people go out and provide electric power all across the country while the rest of us sit on the fence and determine what penalties will be assigned if you don’t meet these goals. No, President Roosevelt said we need a partnership between government and the people.”

Before an audience of nearly 9,000 electric cooperative leaders assembled here for the Association’s 66th Annual Meeting, English observed that whoever is elected president this fall will face a tremendous challenge. Crafting and enacting policies to meet our nation’s climate challenge will consume many of the new president’s first 100 days, he said. But like Roosevelt whose “New Deal” morphed from ill-defined campaign rhetoric into a coherent set of policy initiatives - - not overnight but over a decade -- the new president will have time to implement the new plan. “The components of that plan however, will not be fully in evidence until well after he or she takes office,” he said.

English encouraged co-op leaders to energize their local members, to empower co-op consumers and begin a dialogue between elected officials and electricity consumers. “The cooperative principles require that we educate and inform the membership,” said English. “We have a responsibility also to provide elected officials the information they need to make good decisions and effective policy.”

“Policy makers must be called upon to answer the tough questions,” said English. “Consumers need straight answers about the current state of technology, capacity, and cost. Co-op consumers recognize that balancing electricity needs and environmental goals will be difficult. They want to

know how much this is going to increase their electric bills and what elected officials will do to make it affordable.”

The co-op chief warned that America risks returning to a time when electric service was a privilege enjoyed only by the wealthy. “That would be wrong,” said English. “Creation of a consumer class for which electric power is an unaffordable luxury should not be a legacy of climate change policy.” He held co-op consumers out as a bulwark against such an outcome and challenged co-op leaders in attendance to engage their member owners. “I’m talking about engaging 40 million people in 47 states. You,” he said of the crowd, “are the key to awakening this sleeping giant. You are the key to making certain that consumers truly understand the implications and the threat to their future if our elected officials don’t get the right answers and don’t have a plan.”

More than 9,000 representatives from cooperative electric utilities across the nation attended the NRECA Annual Meeting and Expo, February 22-27, at the Anaheim Convention Center, during which they will set NRECA’s legislative and organizational agenda for 2008. NRECA is the national service organization that represents the nation’s more than 900 private, not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide electric service to more than 40 million people in 47 states.

###