



Michigan's Energy Initiatives Take the National Stage

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Michigan's dedicated efforts and ceaseless drive toward developing energy solutions for our world are starting to garner National, and even international attention. Former President Bill Clinton spent over an hour and a half at NextEnergy on April 29th, at Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's invitation, and was shown displays and demonstrations from over twenty Michigan-based businesses ranging from DaimlerChrysler, Ford, GM and DTE to entrepreneurs such as wind energy manufacturer Danotek Motion Systems, powertrain innovator HybraDrive, fuel cell inventors Adaptive Materials, battery developer T-J technologies, hydrogen infrastructure developer REB Research, and mobile utility system developer Titan energy. In addition, mid-sized manufacturers such as Energy Conversion Devices, United Solar Ovonics were represented at NextEnergy, and President Clinton had perceptive and deeply engaged questions for all of them.

So impressed by what he saw that afternoon of Michigan's growing alternative energy sector, President Clinton spontaneously revised his planned speech for presentation that evening at the Detroit NAACP "Fight For Freedom" banquet to include significant mention of his visit to NextEnergy and Michigan's progressive energy initiatives to a sellout crowd of over 10,000 people.

Scarcely two weeks after the President's visit, NextEnergy again gathered innovators and entrepreneurs from across the state to showcase their latest transportation technology during National Transportation Week, which ran from May 13th through May 18th. National Transportation Week, which takes place during the third week of May every year, was signed into existence by President John F. Kennedy and has won a permanent home in Detroit, starting in 2007, thanks to the efforts of the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau. A week of activities and events was coordinated by the Bureau's president, Larry Alexander and his staff, including Marketing V.P. Christopher Baum and Carla Conner-Penzabene. This year's weeklong celebration of the U.S. transportation industry was focused on alternative energy and fuels and NextEnergy was privileged to play a significant role.

Following a historic "365 Years Of Transportation" celebration at The Henry Ford on Sunday, May 13, NextEnergy hosted a kickoff press conference on Monday, May 14th featuring the dedication of NextEnergy's new Alternative Fuels Platform, speeches from U.S. Department of Transportation's John Toole and Michigan Department of Transportation's Kirk Steudle and an all-afternoon media Ride And Drive at NextEnergy and the surrounding Wayne State University campus featuring over 2 dozen innovative vehicles from both established automotive firms and startup companies.

Later on in the week, a "Smart Cars, Smart Roads" demonstration forum took place in Novi featuring cars that can read roads, avoid accidents, and save fuel, a Clean Fleets Conference at NextEnergy, and the groundbreaking of Biodiesel Industries sixth refinery in Detroit ... the nation's first-ever biodiesel refinery located in a core urban location.

This was Detroit's first hosting of National Transportation Week and all reports from Washington

and the press worldwide indicate that Detroit is indeed the world's transportation technology epicenter and an excellent location from which to communicate the exciting potential of the world's future in transportation. And with all the positive momentum that Michigan has gained in relentlessly pursuing alternative and renewable energy solutions, I expect that by next year's National Transportation Week in May of 2008, our state will even have more alternative energy products and transportation solutions to display proudly in the spotlight on the national and international stage.