



CENTER FOR THE
NEW ENERGY
ECONOMY

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

2024 Impact Report

Leadership



Our Center plays a unique role educating and convening state legislators, regulators, utilities, and communities about challenging energy policy issues. In today's shifting landscape where energy, economics, and resilience meet, our bipartisan focus is more important than ever.

SUZANNE TEGEN, PH.D.
ACTING DIRECTOR



Our Team

We convene policymakers at the state level, providing technical assistance and fostering dialogue that connects energy policy leaders, experts, and communities. Our efforts include the creation and maintenance of publicly available tools and resources, and energy policy research.



Trina Hoffer, Ph.D.
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Who We Are

The Center for the New Energy Economy (CNEE) assists state policymakers including governors, legislators, and regulators to accelerate a nationwide transition to a new energy economy. Since our founding in 2011, CNEE has worked with states to advance bipartisan dialogue on clean energy policy.

We are committed to building an energy economy that relies on collaborative, bipartisan governance with transparent rules and processes. Our team of experts brings experience in state energy policy and policy making processes, clean energy siting, energy markets, regional economic development, climate data and technology, and energy accessibility.



What We Do

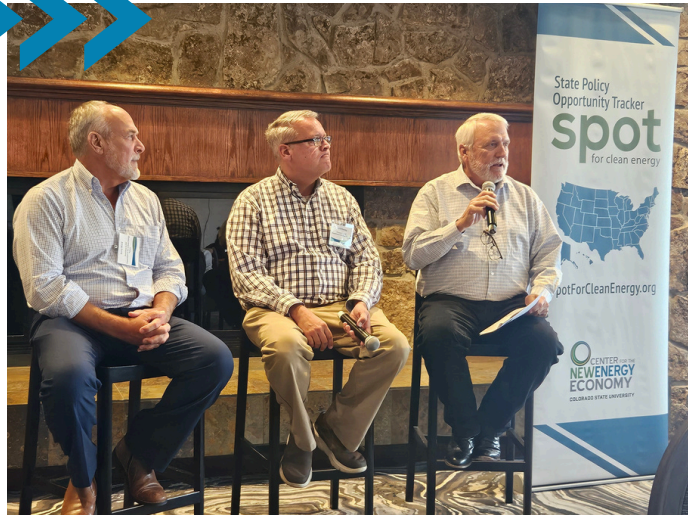
Our work is focused at the state-level across the United States, where we have built strong relationships with state stakeholders and communities at the frontline of the energy transition. These deep connections have an impact on the outcomes of the convenings we host with states and stakeholders, particularly on challenging energy and climate issues in states that have long made energy a major part of their economies.

Through education and engagement, we foster constructive bipartisan dialogue that facilitates inclusive policy development. Our educational forums create space for policymakers to develop durable legislative and policy solutions.



Partnerships & Projects

The Center partners with the **Conservative Energy Network (CEN)** and the **National Caucus of Environmental Legislators (NCEL)** to bring their legislative expertise to the Clean Energy Legislative Academy (CELA). The organizations collaborate with CNEE on emerging energy policy topics and attend CELA to offer their unique perspectives and support to participants.



From left - Larry Ward (CEN), Mark Fleming (CCE), and former Colorado Governor and CNEE founder Bill Ritter, Jr. speak at CELA 2024.

CNEE partnered with The Nature Conservancy and other environmental organizations to support the **Colorado Clean Energy Siting Coalition** to facilitate a multi-faceted stakeholder engagement process across the state. CNEE led engagement for groups including county commissioners, land use experts, environmental justice and labor groups, renewable energy developers, and agricultural professionals from 16 counties.

The process included individual virtual meetings with separate stakeholder groups, and culminated in a full group, two-day in-person summit to inform Colorado siting legislation supported by the Coalition. The legislature ultimately passed Senate Bill 24-212 to facilitate the siting of new energy projects.



Conveners Network panel

CNEE is a founding partner in the **Conveners Network**, a cooperative group of non-partisan organizations working with states to accelerate the development and adoption of sound energy policy. **The States Deployment Initiative**, established by the Conveners Network, supports states' efforts to fully capture the benefits of the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program by providing states access to technical and expert resources.

CNEE assisted the **National Renewable Energy Laboratory** on stakeholder communication to promote distributed energy generation. The goal was to connect people and businesses who could benefit from smaller-scale renewable energy deployment with developers and engineers. The project also connected people and businesses with experts who explained benefits and costs and the affordability and reliability of the technology. CNEE found that policymakers were particularly interested in distributed generation on public schools as a cost-savings measure.



Photo Credit: Jeff Ledermann / Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Partnerships & Projects CONT.

CNEE facilitated meetings in coordination with the **Colorado–Wyoming Climate Resilience Engine** to craft a cohesive, actionable plan that aligns with both states’ economic and environmental priorities and “advances the region’s research and commercialization efforts focused on sensing, monitoring and predictive analytic technologies for climate resiliency spanning methane emissions, soil carbon capture, earth sensing, water scarcity, wildfires and extreme weather.”



From left - CO-WY Engine CEO Mike Freeman, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon, Colorado Governor Jared Polis, and former Colorado Governor and CNEE founder Bill Ritter, Jr. at the CO-WY Climate Resilience meeting in 2024.

CNEE partnered with the **U.S. Climate Alliance**, the **New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)**, and the **New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)**, to conduct stakeholder outreach and engagement that introduced the concept of a cap-and-invest mechanism that would establish a declining cap on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and would generate revenue that can be re-invested to support economic opportunity for all residents.



CNEE’s Acting Director Suzanne Tegen, Ph.D. and CNEE Consultant Pam Eaton (front center) participate at BRECC conference.

CNEE worked in collaboration with federal partners at the **Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities** to assist rural coal towns with economic diversification strategies and to provide resources and networking opportunities. CNEE facilitated conversations about sensitive subjects including coal plant closures and worker reskilling in addition to serving on the national **Advisory Board for Building Resilient Economies in Coal Communities** (a project of the National Association of Counties and the Economic Development Agency). In 2024, CNEE staff focused on Utah and Wyoming, helping coal communities in similar coal closure situations connect to find solutions such as using federal dollars for new infrastructure projects or to support small businesses.

Dating back to the Obama-era Clean Power Plan, CNEE has convened Western (and near-Western) state officials responsible for implementing the federal Clean Air Act, specifically Sections 111(b and d) pertaining to power plant emissions. The most recent proposed EPA regulations (released in May 2023) required active coordination between air and utility regulators, drawing upon a particular expertise of CNEE. Multiple times, in person and through video conferencing, CNEE convened **state air and utility regulators and EPA officials**. By meeting while the rule was still in draft form, state officials were able to genuinely engage EPA officials in ways that shaped the final rule, improved intra-state cooperation between regulatory agencies, and leveraged compliance strategies emerging from participating states. The convenings drew participants from the Great Plains to the Pacific Coast, engaging an average 10 states per session, drawing from 15 states in total.

By the Numbers

CELA The Clean Energy Legislative Academy



The annual **Clean Energy Legislative Academy (CELA)** brings together a bipartisan cohort of state legislators for an intensive four-day event. This event provides attendees the information and resources necessary for developing effective state-level clean energy policy.

Our politically neutral forum provides an opportunity to learn about clean energy policy, discuss state-specific challenges, and speak freely. CNEE has partnered with the Conservative Energy Network (CEN) and the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators (NCEL) to provide bipartisan information and messaging techniques.



From left - Representative Juanita Brent (OH) and Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson (OH) speak with former Washington State Senator Reuven Carlyle.

The Academy brings together 25 to 30 state legislators from across the political spectrum and the country. Legislators learn from a team of expert policy faculty about a variety of issue areas, network with peers, and develop strategies to make their states more competitive in the clean energy marketplace. Attendees join our experts in small breakout groups to explore policy solutions to issue areas identified by legislators.

189

All-time CELA Alumni

42

States with Alumni

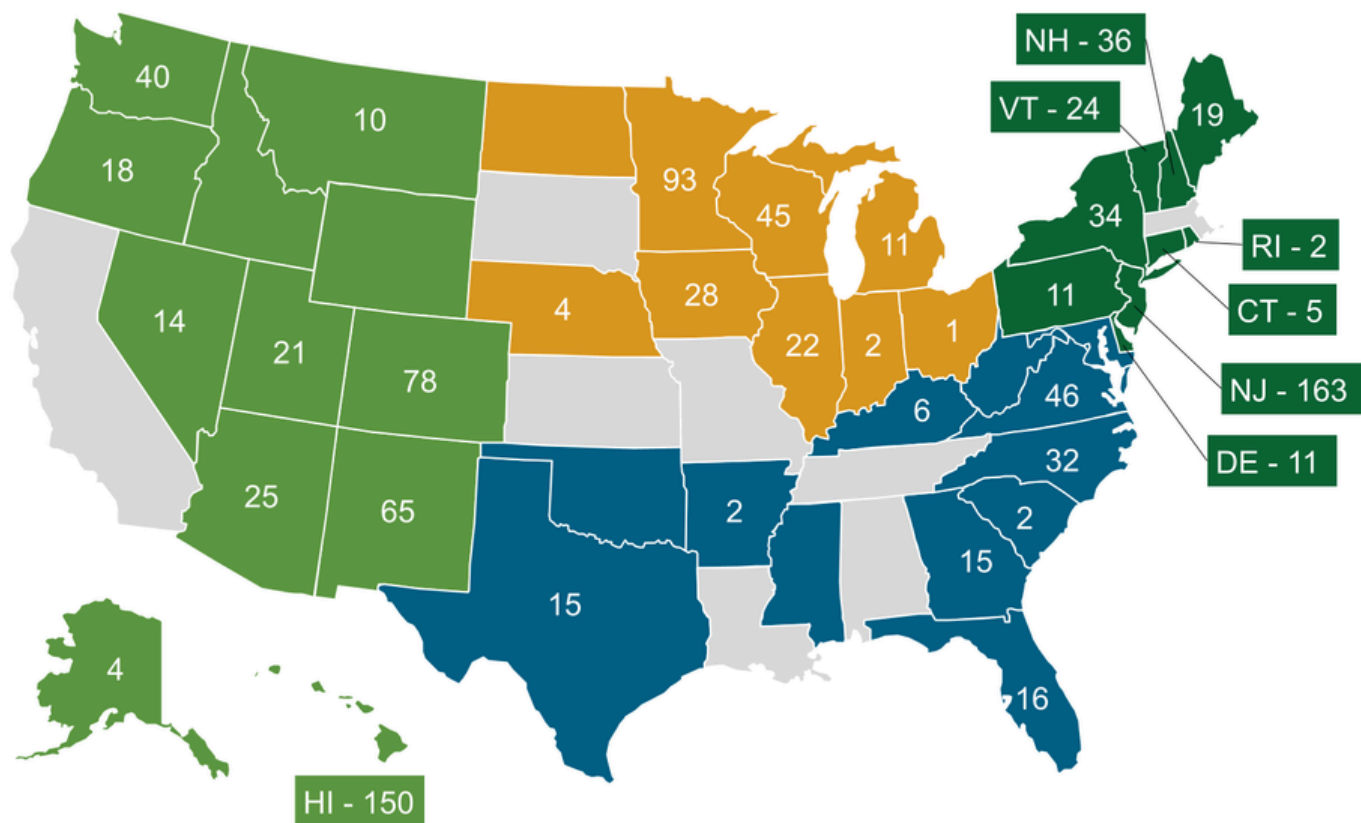
1,070

Alumni-sponsored bills

222

Alumni-sponsored
bills enacted

Legislation Passed by CELA Alumni



Using the myTracker feature of the Advanced Energy Legislation (AEL) Tracker, CNEE tracks the number of bills introduced (1,070) and enacted (222) by CELA alumni legislators. This map shows CELA states by region with the number of advanced energy bills introduced by our alumni since 2018. CELA alumni advanced energy legislation is enacted at a higher rate (21%) than the average for advanced energy-related legislation generally (17%).

Bipartisan Legislation from CELA Alumni in 2024

- **Alaska Senate Bill 152** – Requires regulated utilities to make community renewable energy programs available and allow such projects to interconnect to their systems.
- **Colorado Senate Bill 218** – Creates a grant for line worker apprenticeship programs; requires Xcel Energy to upgrade distribution infrastructure to support the achievement of Colorado’s air quality, beneficial electrification, and decarbonization goals; and directs Xcel to develop a virtual power plant (VPP) program.
- **Illinois House Bill 255** – Creates the Youth and Young Adult Conservation Pilot Program to educate and provide employment opportunities for young adults in natural resources management.

CELA: What Attendees Have to Say



Representative Warren (ME) speaks with CELA faculty.



Senator Bennett (ME) speaks with a CELA subject matter expert.



Representative Storer (WY) meets with CNEE staff.

*“Coming from the House Energy, Utilities, and Telecommunications committee, I was blown away by the experts at the Academy. **The technical application of information the speakers had for all of the states was quite remarkable.** No matter what objectives one has for their state the information on “how” was available. I appreciated the time taken with me to help with roadblocks I have experienced in very thoughtful and innovative ways. For anyone seeking a fresh perspective on innovation, I highly recommend the Academy.”*
Representative Beth Camp (R-Georgia)

*“I am going back to my district with really practical and evidence-based policies to address the real challenges and opportunities that the clean energy economy brings. **This Academy was an ideal balance of technical knowledge and practical, immediately useful state-based strategies.** As a young legislator, I am grateful to have built real connections with experienced leaders and experts in this field – to have a base of knowledge to benefit from and lean on to pursue the energy goals that motivated me to run and that my constituents expect me to lead on.”*
Representative Sophie Warren (D-Maine)

*“CELA is a tremendous learning opportunity for legislators steeped in energy issues as well as those new to the policy area. **An intensive “boot camp” of lectures, one-on-ones, small group seminars, and peer-to-peer sharing.** CELA is a unique program that any serious legislator will benefit from.”*
Senator Rick Bennett (R-Maine)

*“While I’ve had the pleasure to work in utility reform, I learned so much at CELA. **The staff puts together a top-notch program and the faculty has amazing knowledge in policy and technical expertise.** I came away with a much better understanding of how we can promote clean energy strategies to meet the needs for a new energy economy – even in a place like Wyoming.”*
Representative Liz Storer (D-Wyoming)

By the Numbers

Policy Tracking Tools & Briefs

44,000+

advanced energy bills tracked across 50 states and D.C. in the **AEL Tracker**

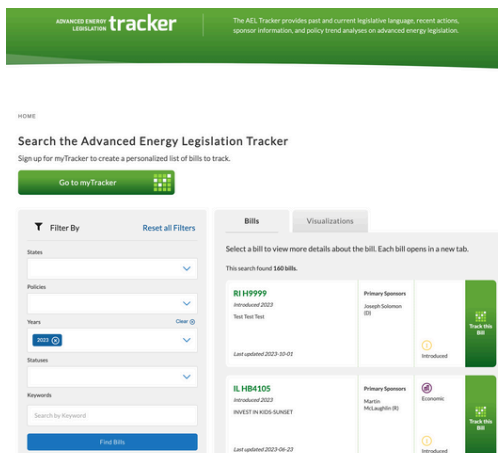
35

clean energy policies analyzed across 50 states in the **SPOT for Clean Energy**

50

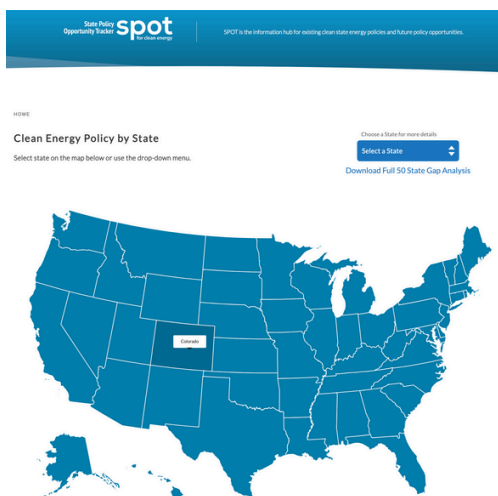
State and energy policy briefs updated regularly

The Advanced Energy Legislation (AEL) Tracker



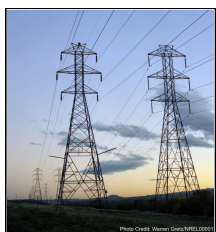
The AEL Tracker database contains advanced energy legislation introduced since 2013 across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Legislation is sorted by our research team into 10 categories and tagged with keywords to make the database highly searchable. Users can create a free myTracker account to track and receive notifications on a personalized list of legislation.

The State Policy Opportunity Tracker (SPOT) for Clean Energy



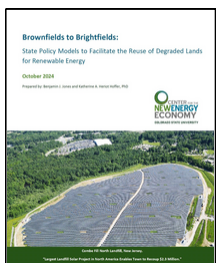
The SPOT for Clean Energy is a hub of information on both existing state clean energy policies and, uniquely, future policy opportunities. Our research team synthesizes information related to 35 clean energy policies at the state level and documents whether a given state policy exists and where it stands related to four to six policy components. Also providing downloadable and informative energy policy briefs, this resource is a planning tool for states to use as they develop their clean energy policy roadmaps.

Research Highlights



Western Energy Policy Opportunity Briefs & Webinars

CNEE developed a set of five opportunity briefs for western state policymakers and their staff and hosted three free webinars related to these briefs. These webinars covered grid enhancing technologies (GETs), the policy pathways and barriers to allow electric transmission infrastructure to be sited along highway rights of way, and clean firm power.



Brownfields to Brightfields

This report examines strategies to promote siting renewable energy projects on degraded lands. As states seek to deploy renewable energy, the issue of siting has become increasingly contentious. Clean power projects located on undeveloped “greenfields” can encounter opposition. Steering these projects towards contaminated, underutilized, and degraded lands provides an alternative with many advantages.



State Consumer Advocates and Western Electricity Regionalization

Discussions for an independently governed wholesale electricity market that could serve the entire West are gaining momentum. In this swiftly moving environment, consumer advocates are concerned that the locus of decision-making is shifting away from state commissions to regional entities, without appropriate safeguards for the public interest and the consumers they represent. Sponsored by Gridworks, this report examines the important consumer protections that Western consumer advocates argue should be incorporated into a western regional organization.

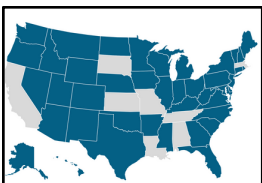


Energy Policy Briefs

CNEE offers seven regularly updated policy briefs on topics including Electrifying Transportation, Modernizing the Grid and Empowering Consumers, and Coal Communities in Transition. Each brief offers an overview of the issue, a discussion of policy opportunities, example programs, and additional resources.

State Specific Energy Policy Briefs

CNEE currently offers 43 regularly updated state briefs which are publicly available but are developed for CELA attendees. Each brief offers background on energy issues and existing policy in the state, a discussion of six broad policy topics and policy opportunities within each, recent energy news from the state, state specific resources, and energy resource maps.



Our Founder's Vision



The New Energy Economy is about our future, our kids' future, our grandkids' future. I think in order to survive we need to produce and consume energy differently. If we do not, our legacy for our children will be a world inferior to that we live in.

GOVERNOR BILL RITTER, JR.
CNEE FOUNDER



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