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## Former Iowa, NFL Football Star Tim Dwight Returns to Iowa to Promote Energy Independence

Former University of Iowa football star and NFL player Tim Dwight returned to Iowa yesterday (Wednesday) to promote energy independence measures being considered by the Iowa legislature.

Speaking at a press conference at the capitol alongside legislators and advocates, Dwight, now owner of the California-based renewable energy company iPower, told legislators that he sees the potential for Iowa to grow renewable energy businesses and jobs.

“I see it on a massive scale. We can bring jobs, not just to install, but to build the components here,” said Dwight.

Dwight and the group of legislators and advocates aim to make clean, renewable energy more affordable and accessible for all Iowa citizens by passing two pieces of legislation – the Energy Independence Payments bill (SF2228, HF2331) and the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) (HSB602, SSB3114) bill.

Representative Mark Kuhn said the policies would create “small distributed energy systems that can be placed all over the countryside and generate renewable energy throughout the state.”

He and others explained that Energy Independence Payments are set rates paid by utility companies in return for clean, renewable power produced by a person or small business owners, such as a farmer.

“Under this proposal, a person who has invested in a renewable energy system like a wind turbine, would receive a return on that investment equal to the cost of production plus a profit, which would allow them to repay the [cost of the system] over a period of 10 years,” said Kuhn.

Representative Nathan Reichert explained the PACE bill would allow the capital investment to be “attached to the house instead of the home owner.”

“That allows you to make longer term investments to improve the overall efficiency of the structure,” said Reichert.

Senator Daryl Beall told the group that wind energy is not only good for small businesses and the Iowa consumer, but it also means jobs and revenue for the state of Iowa.

“You know over the last few years we’ve been pretty good to the big investor-owned utility companies. You’ll see a lot of Alliant and MidAmerican Energy wind farms around the state. We provided them with incentives and reasons to build here. And I’m proud of that. I think it was the right thing to do. But I think we also have to make sure there’s a seat at that wind table for the small farmer—the little guy. And that’s what we’ll continue to do. This is just a tremendous growth opportunity for Iowa and Iowans,” said Beall.

Advocates noted that similar policies have created hundreds of thousands of new jobs in Europe.

“If you look at the leadership that the Germans have had on that subject, they have half the wind and half the sun we have here in Iowa. But, yet, they have more wind and more solar produced in their country than we do here in Iowa,” said Reichert.

Lawmakers were skeptical about the possibility of passage of both bills this year due to the shortened session and the need for more discussions. But the small businessmen present—Jesse Fenske with Van Wall Energy in Perry and James McCain with Innovative Kinetics in Des Moines—urged legislators to move the measures forward as much as possible this year.

“I think its complex, there are a lot of moving pieces and there’s a lot of consensus that needs to be brought to the table, said Representative Reichert. “I think we’ve continued to move the ball. There’s a long way to go. But now that we’ve got Tim on the team, we ought to be able to move the ball a little faster.”

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