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Sen. Maria Cantwell Creates Washington Biofuels Business Collaborative

Brings Businesses and Farmers Together to Pave Way for Future of Biofuels

Effort Kick Starts with Puget Sound Energy Pledge to Run Trucks on Biofuels

SEATTLE, WA – Today, Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) joined members of Washington state’s biofuels industry and business communities for the inaugural meeting of her Washington Biofuels Business Collaborative. The initiative will bring together entities from every step in the biodiesel production and use chain to identify what businesses hope for in a northwest biofuels industry, and how to help the industry grow.

“The energy bill passed this summer contained important incentives for biofuels production,” said Cantwell, a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. **“But truly getting this new industry to pick up speed will require investment and engagement from the private sector—which is what the Biofuels Business Collaborative is all about.”**

Following today’s meeting, Cantwell joined with representatives from Puget Sound Energy (PSE) to announce that PSE will commit to running a portion of its utility truck fleet on a B20 biodiesel blend. A \$70,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will help finance the project by funding the installation of new biodiesel processing technology at Bellingham Community College. The technology will allow for the manufacture of fuel from recycled cooking oil. Combined with a partner project conducted in Canada run through British Columbia Hydro, the effort will save an estimated 12,000 gallons of traditional diesel that utility trucks otherwise would have burned.

“This is an important first step in increasing biofuels use by businesses,” Cantwell said. **“As more businesses begin using biodiesel, we can make real progress toward increased energy independence.”**

By promoting biofuels, the Biofuels business collaborative will increase production and use of fuel sources that encourage energy independence through the use of sustainable, homegrown and recycled fuel sources.

“We are all feeling the pain of high prices at the gas pump. It’s crippling our economy, but we have no real alternatives,” said Cantwell. **“That’s why I’m bringing people together to form the Washington Biofuels Business Collaborative to make sure that we do have alternatives to foreign oil.”**

The meeting involved representatives from Seattle Biodiesel, Propel Fuels, Columbia County Farm Bureau, farmers from all over the state, Puget Sound Energy, Port of Tacoma, Seattle City Light, Port of Seattle, U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, Climate Solutions, Northwest Energy Technology Center, Washington State Department of Agriculture, Washington State University, Heller Ehrman, and others.