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## Energizing State Policy

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In mid-September, the Governor's Energy Policy Council held its initial meeting and launched its mission—oversee development of a comprehensive energy strategy for Georgia. The strategy is to chart a course characterized by an affordable, reliable, and environmentally responsible energy future.

The council comprises 18 members representing industry, utilities, research institutions, public interest groups, legislators, and local governments.

One year earlier, in October 2005, Governor Sonny Perdue directed his staff to devise a comprehensive energy strategy. In the ensuing months, his policy staff worked closely with the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority Division of Energy Resources (GEFA) to research what other states had done regarding energy planning and outline a strategy development process for Georgia.

A web site was developed to facilitate public input to the strategy, which initially had six framework chapters to stimulate public comment. More than 350 recommendations to the strategy were posted, and more than 220 participants were registered to the site. GEFA staff digested these comments and prepared a first draft, and during June the public submitted 727 comments on the draft. Based on this additional input, GEFA produced a second draft and posted it to the web site. Manufacturing interests were well-represented, and recommendations from industry were incorporated in the major chapters—Energy Reliability, Energy Supply, Energy Demand, Economic Development, Incentives, Environment, Education, and Future Planning.

Also, between Sept. 25 and Oct. 3, the council conducted public hearings around the state in Tifton, Savannah, metro Atlanta, Augusta, and Rome.

The council is scheduled to present the state energy strategy to Gov. Perdue on Dec. 15, 2006. This document will act as a road map to assist state government in strategically implementing energy policy for Georgia.

For more information, contact Bill Meffert ([bill.meffert@innovate.gatech.edu](mailto:bill.meffert@innovate.gatech.edu); 404.894.3844) or visit [www.georgiaenergyplan.org](http://www.georgiaenergyplan.org).

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