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**A Step Forward for Renewable Energy in Missouri  
General Assembly Passes the Easy Connection Act**

**(Jefferson City) May 17, 2007** -- Renew Missouri, a collaborative of renewable energy and environmental organizations that promotes sound renewable energy policy in Missouri, applauds the Missouri General Assembly's passage of the Easy Connection Act (ECA).

The ECA establishes uniform procedures to allow Missourians to connect a small renewable energy system to the electric grid in a quick, safe, and reliable manner. The ECA also establishes "true net metering", implemented in 41 states and Washington D.C., which credits an owner of a renewable energy system at a one-to-one rate for electricity "sold" back to the grid.

"The Easy Connection Act makes it easier and more cost effective for a Missourian to install a renewable energy system onto a home or business. This victory is a critical first step to bring Missouri's renewable energy policy up to the national standard," says Erin Noble of the Missouri Coalition for the Environment.

Representative Jason Holsman (D-Kansas City) and Senator Joan Bray (D-St. Louis) sponsored the bill in the Missouri House and Senate respectively. The bills received overwhelming support at the Senate and House Committee Hearings, with Associated Electric Cooperatives being the only entity to testify against the bill.

After a series of negotiations, the Cooperatives' concerns, as well as those of the municipal owned utilities (MUNI's) and the Investor Owned Utilities (IOU's), were reflected in a series of minor changes made in the bill, and ultimately the bill passed out of both the House and Senate committees by a unanimous vote.

At the time of the bill's passage, there was no opposition. The Easy Connection Act passed as an amendment to the "Green Power Initiative Bill" in the House on May 8, by a vote of 146-6, and passed the Senate on May 14 by a vote of 34-0.

"What we're seeing here is a paradigm shift," says P.J. Wilson, Vice President of the nonprofit Heartland Renewable Energy Society. "Before, renewable energy advocates and environmentalists recognized Missouri's lack of effective policy, but we saw little in the way of progress. Concerned individuals and organizations weren't even talking with each other, let alone talking with those capable of instigating change. Now, we're seeing interested parties coming around the table to engage in real dialogue about the nuts and bolts of renewable energy issues. The old way didn't produce results; the new way does."

Renew Missouri formed in 2006 at Missouri Votes Conservation's environmental summit in Columbia, Missouri. The establishment of true net metering and simple interconnection procedures was recognized as a top priority at the summit. The Renew Missouri collaborative is made up of the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, the Heartland Renewable Energy Society, and Missouri Votes Conservation, with Sierra Club providing legal council. More information can be found at the group's website, [www.RenewMO.org](http://www.RenewMO.org).