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## **Legislature Squanders Chance for Clean Air, Clean Energy**

*Conservation groups denounce last-minute failure to pass green legislation*

Denver/Boulder – Colorado conservation groups today expressed their profound disappointment in the failure of the Colorado legislature to pass any clean energy legislation during the 2002 session, which ended last night. Senate Bill 180 would have set Colorado on a path toward generating 10% of its electricity from renewables by 2010. Senate Bill 190 would have dramatically improved air quality along the Front Range by significantly reducing air pollution from three of Xcel Energy’s coal-fired power plants.

“The legislature had the opportunity to clean up three of Colorado’s most polluting coal-fired power plants and to ensure that over time an increasing portion of Colorado’s energy supply comes from non-polluting renewable energy,” said John Nielsen, Energy Project Director at the Land and Water Fund of the Rockies. “That the legislature failed to act on either front is deeply disappointing.”

SB 190 specifically would have reduced sulfur dioxide emissions by 24,000 tons per year and nitrogen oxides by at least 3,500 ton per year. "By defeating the power plant cleanup legislation, the Colorado House of Representatives rejected one of the single most cost-effective measures to achieve cleaner, healthier air for Colorado's families" said Vickie Patton, Environmental Defense senior air quality attorney.

SB 180, known as the Renewable Portfolio Standard, would have required electric utilities to generate 10% (in the original version passed by the Senate) of their power from renewable sources like wind and solar power by 2010. The House passed its own version of SB 180 late Wednesday afternoon.

“Instead of choosing a clean energy future for Colorado, the legislature decided to continue down the dirty energy path,” said Matt Baker, Executive Director of CoPIRG. “They squandered the best opportunity to reduce Colorado’s dependence on polluting fossil fuels that we’ve ever seen in this state.”

“Colorado has missed a golden opportunity to encourage clean energy development in this state, and capture the jobs that go along,” said Rick Gilliam, Senior Technical Advisor for the Land and Water Fund. “Wind and solar energy developers will now look to other states in our region that are more accommodating to these new clean technologies.”

Conservation groups acknowledged the hard work of the sponsors of both bills, Senator Terry Phillips (D-Louisville) and Representative Lola Spradley (R-Beulah) for SB 180, and Senator Phillips and Representative Dianne Hoppe (R-Sterling) for SB 190.

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