



Alternative Energy Report

April 25, 2008
Volume 2, Issue
9

PA Race Energizes Clinton Campaign

Sen. Hillary Clinton carried Pennsylvania's Democratic primary Tuesday by 210,000 votes, a ten percentage point margin, despite being outspent by Sen. Barak Obama by a 3-1 margin. Clinton had received hard core support from Governor Ed Rendell as well as 119 state mayors, including Philadelphia's Michael Nutter and Pittsburgh's Luke Ravenstahl.

In the "old days" of the 1990's, a 55-45% victory was considered a landslide, but with the proliferation of talking heads and political analysts today, the spin around the nation is that Clinton's Pennsylvania showing "gave her a momentum boost," cut into the overall vote disparity, and put off a critical decision on the Democratic nominee for two more weeks until the Indiana and North Carolina primaries. In reality, the results have already generated significant new contributions to her campaign, and the Clinton camp is sparking more attention in those two states.

Governor Rendell had put himself personally on the line for Sen. Clinton, between the PA primary and helping raise millions of dollars for potential re-votes in Florida and Michigan. Clinton's win is a power boost for the Governor, and conversely, a setback for Pennsylvania's US Senator Bob Casey, Jr. who travelled the state in support of Obama.

A re-energized Clinton is hoping that her continuing successes in bigger swing states with higher numbers of electors will show the remaining "Super Delegates" that she is more electable than Obama this fall in a race against Republican Sen. John McCain. More than one-third of the Pennsylvania Democratic Super Delegates remain to announce their candidate preference.

Congressional Races – Power struggles

Four hotly contested primaries were held in the 3rd, 5th, 10th and 18th Congressional districts. In the 10th district, freshman Democratic Rep. Chris Carney will face Republican nominee Chris Hackett in what should be one of the most closely contested Congressional campaigns in November. The district, which covers most of heavily Republican Northeastern Pennsylvania, gave 60 percent of its vote to President Bush in the 2004 presidential election.

In the 3rd District, in Northwestern Pennsylvania, Kathy Dahlkemper won a four way Democratic primary for the opportunity to face Republican Congressman Phil English.

Primaries on both sides marked the elections to find a successor for Republican Congressman John Peterson. In the North central/Northwestern Pennsylvania, Centre County Republican chairman Glenn Thompson appears to have prevailed in a crowded, often ugly nine-candidate GOP primary. Three candidates are separated by less than 1300 votes, with Thompson, who was endorsed by Peterson, currently ahead. He leads hotel developer Matt Shaner and Financial analyst Derek Walker by a two-point

margin with several precincts remaining to report and 4300 absentee ballots yet to be counted.

On the Democratic side, Clearfield County Commissioner Mark McCracken (D) surprised pundits, winning a three way race with just over 40% of the votes.

In the 18th district, in Allegheny County, Steve O'Donnell appears to have captured a three-way Democratic primary and will face incumbent Republican Congressman Tim Murphy this fall.

Looking ahead, former Congresswoman Melissa Hart won the primary to oppose Democratic Congressman Jason Altmire who surprised Hart in the 2006 elections. More than a half dozen state Congressional races will be targeted priority elections for the national parties this fall.

State Senate Seats – Wired?

Five primary contests have likely determined the next state senator, as the seats are overwhelmingly registered for one party, and considered safe seats. Any opposition in the fall is unlikely to generate much support in these districts:

In Philadelphia, a costly primary race was won by Lawrence Farnese over IBEW Local 98 Business Manager John “Doc” Dougherty and civic activist Anne Dicker in the battle to replace retiring Sen. Vince Fumo. Farnese ran as a “reformer,” with the strong support of Sen. Fumo who is facing trial this fall. Farnese received nearly \$300,000 in contributions from other members of the State Senate’s Democratic Caucus.

In heavily Republican Lancaster/York Counties, businessman (and former partner of an ERG client) Lloyd Smucker easily won a five-man primary to succeed Senate Appropriations Chairman Gib Armstrong.

The 23rd Senate district, long held by Sen. Roger Madigan, will see Republican attorney Gene Yaw on the fall ballot. Yaw defeated now retiring House member Steve Cappelli in the primary.

In South-central PA (Adams, Franklin and York Counties), the Republican primary for Sen. Terry Punt’s seat was won by Republican Rich Alloway, who outlasted three other opponents, including Cathy Cresswell, an aide to Sen. Jane Earl.

And out west, in Beaver, Lawrence and Allegheny Counties, Democrat Sean Ramaley won a primary to succeed retiring Democratic Appropriations Chairman Jerry LaValle.

State House of Representatives – Anti-pay raise reformers losing steam?

While a few state legislators had serious competition in Tuesday’s primary, only three members found themselves out of a job for 2009 as a result of activities this spring. While many members had opponents running on reform and pay raise opposition, none lost their primaries.

Democratic Rep. Harold James lost his primary to Kenyatta Johnson in Philadelphia, and Kevin Murphy and Vanessa Brown won the Democratic nominations to replace incumbents Frank Shimkus (113th) and Thomas Blackwell (190th), respectively, when Shimkus and Blackwell were thrown off the ballot for petition irregularities. However, Shimkus ran a write in campaign, and reportedly received enough votes to remain on the ballot this fall.

Notably, the leader of Clean Sweep, Russ Diamond, failed to garner even 25% of the vote in his effort to oust Lebanon County Rep. Mauree Gingrich.

COMMENTARY – Hillary Sweeps Pennsylvania Working Communities

On Tuesday, in the Democratic presidential race, U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., won the cities of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and a few central PA Republican dominated counties, but Hillary Clinton dominated the rest of the state, winning in these blue collar, small town regions by well over 300,000 votes.

Hillary Clinton's broad sweep of the heartland of the Commonwealth was much greater than portrayed by most national news media. Only Barack Obama's major win in Philadelphia kept the numbers respectable for the entire state. Other than some four scattered counties with an insignificant vote tally the Clinton campaign ran up victories exceeding two to one in many communities. For the pros of election campaign management Hillary's victory set the stage for the most significant review of election trends in our recent election history. Never has a candidate failed to win their party's nomination in almost all of the industrial states and then capture their party's presidential nomination. And, there has never been a heavier responsibility placed on the shoulders of the Democratic party super delegates than now. Who will emerge at the leader of the super delegates as they struggle to determine who will be the eventual nominee? That question has taken on a greater importance than who the nominee will be.

For Pennsylvanians, the air of independence is almost traditional. For most Pennsylvanians the sideshow sparring of Governor Ed Rendell and U. S. Senator Bob Casey was more interesting than the dialogue of the actual candidates. It seems that both were practicing for the real game of who will lead the super delegates nationally. If one throws in U. S. Senator Evan Bayh who is assisting Hillary in Indiana – the next industrial battleground – we begin to see the future power of the Democratic Party emerge. Make no mistake about it these are seasoned pros who have won many more major elections than lost. They have learned their lessons well and political theater is more than a one-act play – it is their future livelihood.

NJ Drafts Energy Master Plan

ERG has been asked to participate in shareholder meetings to discuss New Jersey's newly published Energy Master Plan.

New Jersey Gov. Jon Corzine announced last week that the draft New Jersey Energy Master Plan is available to the public online and that four stakeholder meetings will be held next week to provide an overview of the plan, clarify the goals and action strategies.

The Plan, an Implementation Strategies Document and a modeling report for the EMP are available to the public at www.NJ.gov.emp.

The modeling report was prepared by the Center for Energy, Economic and Environmental Policy of Rutgers University.

NJ officials told ERG this week that a series of public roundtable discussions with state and national energy experts will be scheduled later in May and will focus on energy demand, supply and economic growth.

PA Plant to Turn Waste into Ethanol

The Pittsburgh Post Gazette reports that a biofuels developer is building a plant in Westmoreland County to demonstrate a process for producing ethanol from biomass and waste products.

Executives from Coskata, based in Warrenton, Ill. joined Gov. Ed Rendell; Sen. Robert P. Casey Jr., D-Pa.; and Rep. Tim Murphy, R-Upper St. Clair, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center Friday to announce the \$25 million project in Madison.

The plant, which will be on the grounds of the Westinghouse Plasma Center, will employ about 20 to produce ethanol from a variety of materials, including municipal waste, more cheaply and efficiently than producing it from corn, said Bill Roe, Coskata's president and chief executive officer, in an interview with the Post-Gazette.

"It's not necessary for us to remove food from the food chain," he said. The plant will employ the Plasma Center's gasifier to superheat raw materials at temperatures up to 1700 degrees Fahrenheit, then release the resulting synthetic gas, or "syngas," into a bioreactor, where it will become food for microorganisms that convert it into ethanol.

Coskata expects to produce 40,000 gallons of ethanol annually at the pilot facility. General Motors, which has an equity stake in Coskata, will use the fuel for testing its growing line of flex-fuel vehicles. Those vehicles are built to run on E85, a blend of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline, as well as regular unleaded.

The demonstration plant, expected to be fully operational in a year, will pave the way for construction of full-scale plants that can produce 40 million to 400 million gallons of ethanol annually, Mr. Roe said. Those plants are expected to employ 100 to 150 workers each. Sites have yet to be selected for those facilities.

Mr. Roe said Coskata's process will produce 100 gallons of ethanol from a ton of feedstock, compared with 67 gallons produced from the same amount of corn, and that the fuel will cost less than \$1 a gallon to produce.

GM spokesman Alan Adler said the company partnered with Coskata because "when there's a disruption in the supply of fuel it changes the way people use their vehicles. "Ethanol is the only play we can make in the near term that will make a difference."

Brubaker Farms Installs Manure Digester for Electricity

Last week, Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff helped unveil a new anaerobic manure digester at Brubaker Farms in Lancaster County, which generates more than 4,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per day, or enough to power more than 150 homes.

The digester runs on manure from the 700 cow dairy farm. The farm only uses about five percent of the power generated by the digester, so the rest is sold to the power grid for neighboring communities. Also, by using the digester to process the farm's manure, they are also reducing their impact on air and water quality

The farm estimates that the equivalent of 47,300 pounds of carbon dioxide is reduced per day through the digester. The solid waste of the digester is used instead of sawdust for animal bedding, and is sold as mulch.

Oil Companies, Universities Investigate Alternate Paths to Biofuels

Shell and Virent Energy Systems, Inc. have made public their joint research and development efforts to convert plant sugars directly into "biogasoline," avoiding the fermentation process used to produce ethanol in today's biorefineries. Virent, a biofuels company, has developed a catalytic process to convert sugars into hydrocarbons, the chemicals found in petroleum. This "BioForming" technology creates "biogasoline" molecules that have a higher energy content than ethanol, yielding improved fuel efficiency. After working together for a year, the companies report that the BioForming technology has advanced rapidly, exceeding milestones for yield, product composition, and cost, but the companies intend to further improve the technology before scaling it up for commercial production. According to Virent, the biogasoline matches petroleum gasoline in functionality and performance.

Meanwhile, university researchers have found catalytic methods of converting plant materials to biofuels, similar to the path being investigated by Shell and Virent. Last week, engineers at the University of Massachusetts Amherst published their research into a one-step process for converting biomass such as wood into a gasoline substitute. The process involves the rapid heating and cooling of the biomass in the presence of a catalyst, producing "gasoline range hydrocarbons" in a minute or less.

GRANTS

DEP Energy Grants Open

As announced earlier this month in AER, the following Department of Environmental Protection energy-related grants are now open.

Program Summaries and Deadlines:

Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant (AFIG) - program's mission is to help improve PA's air quality and reduce the use of imported oils through the use of alternative fuels. Deadline for submittal of applications is June 15, 2008.

Energy Harvest – program mission is to deploy cleaner energy sources that protect water or air quality, and have a positive economic benefit. Provides funding for renewable energy deployment; biomass energy projects; coal-mine methane, waste coal reclamation for energy; implementation of innovative energy efficiency technologies; or clean distributed generation infrastructure improvements. Deadline for submittal of applications is June 13, 2008.

Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority (PEDA) – solicitations are varied and diverse. In general, PEDA provides grants, loan guarantees for alternative energy projects and related research referring to deployment projects, manufacturing or research involving the following types of fuels, technologies or measures: solar energy; wind; low-impact hydropower; geothermal; biologically derived methane gas, including landfill gas; biomass; fuel cells; coal-mine methane; waste coal; integrated gasification combined cycle, and; demand management measures, including recycled energy and energy recovery, energy efficiency and load management. Deadline for submittal of applications is June 20, 2008.

For more information on these programs, including eligibility requirements, applications, or assistance in developing applications, contact Energy Resources Group at 717-233-8606 or info@pa-erg.com.

DOE Offers Up to \$4 Million for Biomass to Biofuel Research

DOE is offering up to \$4 million for university research into cost-effective, environmentally friendly ways to convert biomass into biofuel. Twelve U.S. universities will be selected for funding, and each of them will contribute a minimum of 20% of the cost share, resulting in about \$4.8 million being invested in these projects. The Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) seeks projects that improve the conversion of biomass to advanced biofuels through biochemical, thermochemical, and chemical processes and is focused on lowering production costs and increasing yields and productivity. While the FOA is mainly focused on conventional biomass sources, it also includes the enhanced production of oils from algae. Applications are due on June 2. Click [here](#) for more information.

National Clean Diesel Finance Program

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requests proposals for the SmartWay Clean Diesel Finance Program. Through this program, EPA will support the establishment of innovative nationally-focused financial programs to fund diesel emissions reductions. Proposed innovative financing may include, but are not limited to: Issuance of loan guarantees, equity investments that leverage additional funds, revolving loan funds, or issuance of tax exempt or taxable bonds for low cost loan programs. \$3 million expected to be available, up to 4 awards anticipated. Responses due June 9. Click [here](#) for more information.

Growing Greener Watershed Applications

The application period for Growing Greener Watershed Applications is now open. The application submittal deadline is May 16, 2008. The program's purpose is to make funds available to restore watersheds and streams, reclaim mined lands, and remediate AMD. Click [here](#) for more information.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grants and Loans

The U.S. Department of Agriculture requests proposals for Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Grants and Guaranteed Loans. This initiative supports the purchase of renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements for agriculture producers and rural small businesses in eligible rural areas. \$15 million expected to be available, 250 awards anticipated. Grant-only proposals due 4/15/08 and 6/16/08. Guaranteed loan applications due 6/16/08. Combination grant-loan packages due 6/16/08. Click [here](#) for more information.

Community Wind Project is Open for Applications

Saint Francis University Renewable Energy Center is excited to announce that applications are being accepted for its Community Wind Project. With this project you have the possibility of having a meteorological tower installed on your property to assess your wind resource.

"Community wind" is a new kind of wind development featuring large-scale wind power typically owned by private or public entities for on-site usage or sale to the grid. Most importantly, community wind is about local ownership, which maximizes benefits to the local community. Community wind keeps energy investment dollars local, creates jobs, catalyzes new industry, and increases public acceptance of wind energy and other renewable energy projects.

Since 2005, the Community Wind Project has received over 450 applications from 40 counties across the state and has assessed the wind resource on 8 sites in four counties. The Project now seeks additional entities interested in local ownership of large-scale wind power.

If you would like to receive an application and you are a private or public entity and

meet the following requirements listed below please contact the Renewable Energy Center at 814-472-2872 or at renewable@francis.edu.

EVENTS

[Penn State Cellulosic Biofuels Short Course](#), June 8-10, Philadelphia, Pa.

The Penn State Cellulosic Biofuels Short Course: Feedstock, Conversion, and System Integration, is designed to provide an in-depth technical overview for the rapidly increasing number of professionals that need greater familiarity with the biomass area, or that want to expand knowledge beyond their specialty. The focus will be on the use of lignocellulosic biomass to produce ethanol and other products in next generation biorefineries.

[10th Small Fuel Cells Conference](#), April 30-May 2, Atlanta, GA.

The U.S. Department of Energy will discuss how portable fuel cells offer the earliest market opportunities, in addition to citing the ready market for small fuel cells and their less stringent technical requirements.

[Great Green America Fest](#), May 3-4, Lancaster PA

Everyone can make a difference in saving the environment and improving energy efficiency. Discover what steps you can take during this family-oriented, fun-filled eco-event with timely and relevant displays, workshops and films.

[National Solar Energy Conference](#), May 2-8, San Diego, CA

Solar 2008 is the premier technical conference for solar energy and energy efficiency professionals.

[National Alternative Fuels & Vehicles Conference](#) May 11-14. Las Vegas, Nevada

The event will offer a wealth of information to advocates for clean transportation, with a variety of conference sessions organized around the following categories: fuels & fueling, electric drive, money, policy, and vehicles. The Expo, which features more than 125 exhibitors from around the globe, will showcase alternative-fueled light-, medium-, and heavy-duty vehicles.

[Energy from Biomass and Waste](#), October 14-16, Pittsburgh, PA.

Energy from biomass and waste can make a significant contribution to oil-independence and climate protection. The technology opens up new earning potentials and markets for the waste management and power generation industry as well as for the agriculture sector.

NEWS CLIPS

[German company sees trees as car fuel](#)

[First Large Building-Integrated Wind Turbines Spin in Bahrain](#)

[Boeing Flies First Fuel-Cell-Powered Manned Aircraft](#)

COPYRIGHT © PENNSYLVANIA ENERGY RESOURCES GROUP, LLC.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.pa-erg.com

Energy Resources Group

200 North Third St. | Suite 1100 | Harrisburg, PA 17101

Phone: 717-233-8070 | Fax: 717-233-8665

E-Mail: info@pa-erg.com

[Click Here](#) to be removed from this list