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## **Public campuses promote energy conservation, cost reductions, cleaner economy** ***New Energy for Campuses* provides blueprint for Ohio colleges**

Ohio campuses could dramatically reduce energy use, save significant resources over the long term, and help invigorate a clean energy economy according to *New Energy for Campuses: Energy Saving Policies for Campuses and Universities*, written by the National Apollo Alliance and released by Policy Matters Ohio and Ohio Apollo. The study demonstrates that colleges and universities across North America are increasing their energy efficiency and realizing energy savings. Key reforms recommended include:

- Upgrade to Efficiency: Replace inefficient appliances and upgrade inefficient buildings;
- Build Better: All new buildings should be high performance and energy efficient;
- Move to Clean Power: Buy or generate electricity from renewable resources;
- Expand Transportation Alternatives: Make it easy to get around on less fuel;
- Implement Green Purchasing: Buy products that use less energy, last longer, and are better for the environment, and
- Institutionalize Conservation: Create a culture of conservation on campus

Many campuses have followed these suggestions, like the University of British Columbia, which builds all new facilities to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEEDs) silver standard (a high performance building standard) and earns revenue by selling savings to a renewable energy credit trading company; the University of Iowa, which is shifting its power from coal to biomass and selling emission offsets on the Chicago Climate Exchange; and the University of Michigan, which installed energy improvements in 123 buildings and realized \$9.7 million in savings.

Ohio's 62 public campuses have 2391 buildings, largely constructed in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. After 40 to 50 years buildings need retrofitting or rehabilitation, which helps explain why campus debt for capital construction tripled between 1998 and 2004, from \$984 million to \$3.0 billion, pushing into strained college budgets. "Finding sensible ways to maintain aging buildings without raising tuition has never been more important," said Wendy Patton, Policy Matters Policy Liaison. "We have a tremendous opportunity to obtain savings through energy efficiency. Over the long term this can improve the environment and reduce costs to both students and the state budget."

Governor Strickland's Executive Order 2007-02S established the Higher Education Energy Challenge, which will recognize and reward teams on public campuses who implement energy-saving strategies and House Bill 251, passed at the end of the 126<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, created a committee charged with reducing energy consumption on all public campuses. *New Energy for Campuses* provides case studies of successes elsewhere as committees and teams get started.

