Rural Energy Forum and Tour in Indiana
October 8 & 9, 2014

Media report prepared by Cater Communications;
Media outreach conducted by the Indiana Farm Bureau, the Jasper REMC,
the 25x’25 Alliance & Cater Communications
INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (DTN) -- Rural electric cooperatives have a chance to take advantage of livestock operations, local landfills and solar farms to diversify electrical power generation in their areas.

The 25X25 Alliance, a group that advocates for 25% renewable energy production nationally by 2025, put together a tour last week in Indiana to highlight the way renewable energy is developing in some states, particularly through work done by rural electric cooperatives. Ernie Shea, project coordinator for 25X25, said cooperatives are developing diverse ways to generate power beyond the central power stations, largely through the capture of methane, but also with solar.

More than 90% of rural electric cooperatives have at least some renewable-energy power sources, according to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Most of that power comes from purchase agreements.

While renewable power at electric cooperatives has surged since 2007, 25X25 wants to partner with six or seven rural utilities to pilot more renewable energy projects. The group also wants to create an informational exchange program with similar rural cooperatives in Germany where renewable electricity has been a major economic driver for rural communities.

Retired Gen. Donald Hoffman of the U.S. Air Force took part in the tour and spoke as the group gathered at the Indiana Farm Bureau offices. Hoffman now serves on the military advisory board for the Center for Naval Analysis (CNA Corp.). The board is largely made up of retired general officers who examine policy issues affecting national security. Fossil fuels and energy independence have become focal points for the advisory board.

"Nobody argues that in 50 to 100 years, fossil fuels are going to be fewer and more expensive," Hoffman said. Renewable energy "gives us some breathing room," though Hoffman noted that one of the difficulties in developing renewable energy sources is that some of them won't pan out.

"We're going to chase them down a rabbit hole that doesn't pay off," he said.
Hoffman said climate change is the "elephant in the room" that helps tie energy to national security interests. The costs of mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects require the country to keep looking for new ways to produce energy that lower our collective carbon footprint.

Indiana Lt. Gov. Sue Ellspermann also spoke briefly, saying that Indiana has an "all of the above" energy strategy, and the state sits on a 300-year supply of coal. Approximately 88% of Indiana’s power generation comes from coal, and the state doesn’t have a mandate to spur renewable energy. Indiana officials are working on a state energy policy that is expected to roll out in November.

"We’re going to continue to try to keep energy prices reasonable, which means doing what is necessary to make our power plants in the state clean and be able to continue to provide that affordable electricity across the state," Ellspermann said. "But in addition, we support solar and wind and all of the biofuels that are out there. We want to see all of those out there as well."

Indiana’s cooperatives have latched on to methane digesters to generate power in several ways. Wabash Valley Power Association captures methane to generate electricity at 14 landfills across the state owned by Waste Management of Indiana. At each facility, a pair of 20-cylinder engines combine to generate 3.2 megawatts of electricity.

All told, Wabash Power will be generating 55 megawatts of power from the landfills by the end of the year. In general, a single megawatt produces enough energy to power about 1,000 homes. While people often say they want renewable power, Wagoner said ratepayers are largely reluctant to sign up for green programs that could increase their rates. Other ratepayers don’t want to see the costs of renewable-energy projects paid by everyone.

"Everybody wants green power, but nobody wants to pay extra. That’s the friction we face," said Greg Wagoner, vice president of business development for Wabash Valley Power.

Besides generating electricity, the mini power plants lower the greenhouse-gas emissions coming off the landfills. Methane has more than 20 times the greenhouse-gas effect as carbon dioxide, so channeling those emissions to power generation has the effect of reducing a landfill’s emissions by anywhere from 60% to 90%, according to EPA.

The facilities still release heat into the air during the methane conversion. Wabash Power has been trying to find local farms or businesses that might be able to use that heat. "It’s just wasted heat going up into the air, so we would love to find a use for it," Wagoner said.

About an hour southeast of Chicago, Jasper County Rural Electric Membership Corp., is capturing methane from the concentration of larger dairies in the county. There are as many as 15 dairies in the area that have anywhere from 3,500 to 7,000 cows each. Digesters were developed in the area mainly for manure management to reduce runoff, odor and flies. At first they flared off the methane but then began investigating ways to capture the electricity and heat from the digester process.

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Effectively, 3,500 cows generate roughly about 1 megawatt of power. Combined, the area's dairy digesters are producing 7.4 megawatts of power every day. If every dairy farm met its energy capacity, it would actually cause overload problems for the cooperative. Its transfer stations weren't built to handle 10 to 15 megawatts of power, said Bryan Washburn, CEO of the Jasper County Rural Electric Membership Corp. Fair Oaks Farms, known for its tourism aspects, has a methane digester taking in manure as liquids from four dairies that have 14,000 cows total. The liquid waste goes through a sifting process to remove the sand the dairy uses for bedding. The digester is a 275-foot by 300-foot concrete box that's 16-feet deep and holds 6.2 million gallons of manure.

Bacteria break down the solids and generate 1.4 million cubic feet of biogases in the process. The outgoing liquids are used as irrigation water and solids for fertilizer that is spread on nearby fields.

The dairy not only produces electricity, but also compressed natural gas that serves as fuel for Fair Oaks' dairy delivery truck fleet.

BioTown Ag, outside of Reynolds, Ind., is a 4,500-head cattle feedyard and 9,000-head swine operation. It started in 1991 and added a methane digester in 2010. The company uses corn husks from a seed corn processor as its main feed silage. BioTown Ag also collects food waste from businesses, some of which is fed to animals while the rest goes into the digester mix. BioTown Ag created a closed-loop by capturing expended heat or energy and turning it back into the facility for another use rather than releasing it. The facility also churns out enough fertilizer for area farmers to reduce buys of commercial fertilizer by roughly 7,000 ton a year.

"Our neighbors, who haven't had livestock on their fields in 50 to 60 years, are really seeing the benefits," said Brian Furrer, president of BioTown Ag.

Tipmont REMC in Linden, Ind., also is dabbling in community solar power with a 240-panel array that just recently went on-line. The 100 kilowatt array is set up to allow customers to buy the panels for $1,250 each and then receive credits on their utility bills. Members can also use a financing option to buy the panels over a three-year period. This again reaches out to residents who are willing to invest to buy green energy without requiring the entire cooperative's membership to have to pay for that power.

Chris Clayton can be reached at Chris.Clayton@dtn.com
Saturday  
October 11, 2014

**The Daily Smile**
Name: Mike King
Where I Live: Dryfork
What I love doing: Hunting/vehicle work
What I want to do: Go on an adventure
"I'm enjoying the start of fall.
Distant Smiles . . . . .  B12

**Weather**
Today: Sunny
High 60
Tonight: Clear
Low 37

**Index**
Antiques . . . . . . .  B12
Clothing . . . . . . .  A9-10
Comics . . . . . . . . . .  A4
Crossword . . . . . . .  A4
Daily $2.00 . . . . . . .  A1
Obituaries . . . . . . .  A2
Sports . . . . . . . . . . .  B1-14
TV Listings . . . . . . .  A7-8

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**Woman killed in two-car collision**

**Defense takes a stand**

**Community can play role in helping abused kids**

**Energy advocacy group tours local dairies**

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**Weekend Datebook**

Due to Columbus Day and no postal service, the Rensselaer Republican will not be published on Monday, Oct. 11.

**SATURDAY, OCT. 11**
- Rensselaer Moose Lodge Steak Dinner, 5-8 p.m., at the lodge. Menu includes prime steak, baked potatoes or rice, salad, and bread. Carry-overs available by calling 866-8954.
- **VFW Post 1279**
  - Karaoke Night, 7 p.m.-midnight, at the post.
  - Fencing @ Chuck Ramsey Event is open to the public.

**SUNDAY, OCT. 12**
- **Victory Baptist Church Homecoming**, Sunday worship begins at 10:30 a.m, with special singing by the group. Good Will. There will be a carry-in dinner following services with Good Will and other singers performing an after-service concert following the meal. Victory Baptist is located 12 miles west of I-465 off Route 10 in the Valley Forge subdivision. For more information call the church at 515-4505 or Larry and Sharon Coke at 866-4949.

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**RENSSELAER — There are currently 43 child abuse/neglect cases in Jasper County. That number merely shows the number of children abused or neglected that the courts have found out about and become involved in within the county. There are currently at least three cases on schedule to be heard within the Jasper County courts involving an infant or toddler who was allegedly abused and brought to the hospital with multiple broken bones. Jasper County CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) (Master Katie Hall) has seen first hand the abuse and neglect of children within Jasper County serving as the CASA coordinator who monitors cases from the courts of children who are in need of services in the county. When CASA becomes involved, the abuse or neglect has already happened. CASA is there to help pick up the pieces and move forward in being the voice for the child who has no voice in the court process.

"The CASA is a community member who volunteers their time to visit with the child monthly, and informs the judge how the child is doing when a court hearing occurs. We have wonderful judges in Jasper County that listen to the CASA, and take into account what they have to say. The volunteer also makes sure that the child is in the best placement possible, where they can thrive in a safe, healthy, and happy environment. CASA volunteers can also recommend to the court, different programs and services that are of great interest to the child."

**Energy advocacy group tours local dairies**

**Director of Operations Mark Stoermann, of ampCNG, which runs the digesters at Fair Oaks Farms explains how the digestor produces methane gas. General Donald Hoffman, USAR Ret, far right, looks over the area. Landfill gas operation, Tippecanoe REMC, Community Solar Project and Birchrun in Reynolds, along with the steps in Newton and Jasper County. Ernie Shea, project coordinator for the 25x25 organization said Indiana is in the forefront of renewable energy technology, and that was why**

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**Raceway Food Mart**
117 W. Bridge • 812-856-0246
Hi there. It's me again, wishing you a very happy Saturday morning. To be more accurate, it's actually you again, reading what I wrote earlier when it really was me (or I put my heart into answering the first question of the day). "What shall I write about? Good question indeed!"

Well, thankfully, I've come up with a idea. I want to say "Good morning to all of the readers in general and the following in particular. See if you can guess what they have in common."

Here are their names:

Dr. John Egan, Ron Timmons (the lawyer), John Bolich, Harley Houtkamp, Allen Brown, Tom Cray, Store Roberts, Todd Sammons, another Store, the Mayor. And oh, you, another mayor, now deceased. He's Bob Wilson and his family is dear to my heart.

Just one more name and maybe I can do more.

Betty’s Kitchen

Betty Brown Miller (219) 866-8845
going. Thanks to all of you.

One more thing that today's line has to do with is that most of them are very career-minded. There's a doctor, lawyer, Indiana chief (semi) and even two mayors. I have a lot of family members connected with police work and post office duties. I honestly don't mind all at whom it's time to visit my den.

And not all lawyers are "bad guys," right Ron and Sandy. And now I will "cease and desist" on all of this writing and many of the other things that have in common. See you in November.

Becoming a Better Reader

Submitted Article

Saint Joseph's College Elementary Education major Jacob Brown of Rensselaer will be honored along with his two classmates, men and women, on November 3rd at the annual Senior Banquet in Indianapolis.

"Best Midwestern College" by US News & World Report, Saint Joseph's College is a four-year Catholic college offering 27 majors, four group majors, 35 minors, and nine pre-professional programs, complemented by the nationally-acclaimed Core Program. Founded and sponsored by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, IHC is located in Rensselaer, Indiana, approximately 45 minutes from both Chicago and Indianapolis, on a park-like campus of 186 acres and has an enrollment of nearly 1,200 students.

"Realizing the Dream" of making this inspirational award came from across the others with the organization. Dr. John Egan, Ron Broussard, Neil Clapp, deceased. He's Bob Broussard, another mayor, now the Mayor. And oh yes, Betty Brown Miller is back to Indiana in 2011 after being in Florida for 10 years. He recently began attending the events, lunch and activities at the Senior Center. Anyone interested is invited to join the group. Call 866-433-3 for further JCCS information. Pictured with Elmer are his daughters Elaine Sanders of Rensselaer, Mary Huber of Bloomington, Indiana, and Linda Model of Reanoake, Illinois. Not pictured is Baby Barnes of Lafayette.

On Thursday, Oct. 9, Elmer Bucher celebrated his 88th birthday at the Rensselaer Senior Center. Three of Bucher’s four daughters joined him at the lunch and birthday celebration.

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SJC student receives Realizing the Dream Award

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Indiana’s Leadership in Renewable Energy Draws National Attention

October 9, 2014
Gary Truitt

A group of national leaders has come to Indiana to see the advances our state has made in renewable energy and the role that agriculture has played in its development. The group toured the Hoosier State on Thursday looking at the progress that has been made in renewable biofuels, solar, and wind energy. Indiana Farm Bureau President Don Villwock said Indiana is a leader in the development new sources of energy, “We have the second largest biodiesel plant in the world at Claypool, IN, and 13 very progressive ethanol plants that have really developed the market in this state.” Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann spoke to the delegation and said much of this credit for the development of the renewable energy sector in Indiana is agriculture, “We are very proud of agriculture and the leadership role it has played in renewable fuels in our state, and we expect this to continue.” She added that Indiana also has a wealth of traditional energy sources including a 300 year supply of coal and supply of oil in the Illinois basin.

Media report prepared by Cater Communications;
Media outreach conducted by the Indiana Farm Bureau, the Jasper REMC, the 25x’25 Alliance & Cater Communications
Ellspermann hinted at a new state energy policy that is under development and will be rolled out next month. State Director of Agriculture Ted McKinney said his department has been at the table during the development of this policy and sees agriculture as playing a key role in the development of new sources of renewable energy.

The Hoosier State is also a hotbed of innovation when it comes to new sources of energy, including the wind farm in Benton County, the solar project in Tipton County, and the methane digester at the Fair Oaks Dairy in Jasper County that is turning animal waste into natural gas. The group toured the Fair Oaks farm along with several other locations in the state. They also got a briefing on new cellulosic research at Purdue University. U.S. Air Force General Donald Hoffman, retired, a member of the delegation, told HAT that
Indiana is on the cutting edge of the next generation of renewable energy, “Indiana agriculture has found ways to use the waste from agricultural production to create energy; that is a win/win situation for everyone.” Hoffman said developing new sources of energy is vital for national security.

The tour was sponsored by the 25×25 Initiative, whose goal is to have 25% of our nation’s energy needs come from renewable sources by the year 2025. Currently, the group says 11% of the nation’s energy comes from renewable resources.


Sample social media hits promoting the above article:

Fred Bentlar @Bentlar · Oct 10
Indiana’s Leadership in Renewable Energy Draws National Attention
go.gl/QVCt40 #climate #indiana #renewable #leadership

Climate & Security @CntrClimSec · Oct 10
U.S. Air Force General Donald Hoffman on renewable energy & national security
hoosieragtoday.com/indianas-leade... @CNA_org

realbiggestidea @RealBiggestIdea · Oct 9
#renewable Indiana’s Leadership in Renewable Energy Draws National Attention
- Hoosier Ag Today bit.ly/1v99cn7
Renewable energy is a key to national security

Posted October 10, 2014 by Meghan Grebner

Energy independence is a key to national security. Retired US Air Force General Donald Hoffman, a member of the military advisory board, says since World War 1, fuel has replaced fodder as our means of mobility from military actions. He adds, “Both on the battlefield and getting to the battlefield and training and getting ready to go to the battlefield all involve enormous amounts of energy.”

Currently the country is dependent on energy from other countries, some of which aren’t friendly, and that is a concern. But, Hoffman says, America is on target to change that. “We’re approaching point now with extraction of non-traditional means of getting energy that we’re approaching an energy independence state – perhaps,” he says. “Energy independence, energy divergence and diversity, and assured energy resources – not just here in the US, but around the globe – are very, very important to our national security.”

Last week the General was touring renewable energy projects throughout in Indiana as part of the 25x’25 Alliance’s Rural Energy Forum and Tour.

Hoffman tells Brownfield the state’s agriculture industry is a benefit to renewable energy. “They have found ways to take waste streams from the agricultural processes and to take the real estate that’s involved in agriculture and convert that into a win-win situation to produce alternative energy,” he says.

The goal of the 25x’25 Alliance is to secure 25 percent of the nation’s energy supply from renewable sources.

Sample social media hits promoting the above article:

Sample social media hits promoting the above article:
Highlighting Indiana’s renewable energy projects
Posted October 9, 2014 by Meghan Grebner

The goal of the 25x’25 Alliance is to provide 25 percent of the nation’s energy from renewable sources by 2025. Right now – around 10 percent of the nation’s energy comes from renewables. Today, the 25x’25 Alliance is in Indiana to see first-hand some of the progressive renewable energy projects in the state.

Ernie Shea, project coordinator for the Alliance says Indiana’s rural electric co-ops are providing cutting edge innovation in how electricity is produced. “Whether that is in the form of solar energy or wind energy, biogas development,” he says, “there are a variety of ways in which smaller, distributed generation projects can be knitted together and create a cleaner energy sources and create an economic engine within the co-op.”

Ernie Shea, 25x’25 Alliance

Indiana’s Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann says with Indiana’s “all of the above” energy strategy, they can lead by example. “We support solar and wind and the biofuels that are out there,” she says. “We want to see more of those out there as well. As we roll out a full energy strategy in November – you’ll get to see a few more things that will help lift up Indiana.” Ellspermann says the agriculture industry will be a part of the energy plan to be rolled out next month.

Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann

The 25x’25 Alliance’s Rural Energy Forum and Tour held in Indiana last week highlighted some of the reasons Indiana is a leader in renewable energy. Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann told attendees the administration is supportive of all forms of renewable energy. “As we roll out an energy strategy in November you’re going to get to see a few more things that will really help lift up Indiana into leadership in energy stability,” she says.

And adds agriculture will be part of that plan. “We’re very proud of agriculture and the role it has played, really a leadership role in renewable fuels,” she says. “We fully expect that to continue. Indiana supports renewable fuels at the biofuels level, we support the initiatives that agriculture is taking. We think agriculture is a responsible partner in looking for energy solutions.”

Indiana’s new energy plan, Ellspermann says, will be unveiled in November.

http://brownfieldagnews.com/2014/10/14/indiana-unveil-new-energy-strategy/
October 10, 2014

Energy Tour Highlights Green Projects In Rural Indiana

JILL SHERIDAN

On Thursday, a group of national and local leaders hopped on a bus for a tour of renewable energy projects in rural parts of Indiana.

Greg Wagner, vice president of business development for Wabash Valley Power, starts off the day with a tour of a small block building located across the street from a Danville landfill.

"We pride ourselves on the block building, there is some noise but it's manageable," says Wagner. "The community doesn't even know we're here half the time and the power goes right out on the distribution lines, right out in front of the building.

"The small footprint facility, which was opened in 2012, takes methane gas from the dump and turns it into electricity, providing enough juice to power around 2,000 local homes.

The stop at Twin Bridges was one of five sites picked for the tour that highlighted Indiana's investment in homegrown energy sources. The group also visited a community solar project and farms operating on energy provided by methane digesters.

Retired Air Force Gen. Donald Hoffman was on the tour. He is on a military advisory board studying critical national security issues including America's dependence on foreign oil.
"It limits our diplomatic influence when we have to consider the energy impact of our position with some of these countries that are providers, they’re not all our friends," says Hoffman

Although Indiana is making strides in developing renewable energy opportunities, coal fired electric power plants still provided 84 percent of the state's net electricity generation last year.

A recent USDA grant will help support 13 new energy projects in rural Indiana.

Farm Bureau Says Renewable Energy Delivering Benefits

By NETWORK INDIANA
Posted October 9, 2014

The Indiana Farm Bureau president says ethanol now accounts for 40 percent of the state’s corn production.

Villwock says that renewable farming methods benefit Indiana’s farmers.

The Indiana Farm Bureau says the state’s small-scale renewable energy is gaining attention.

The 25×25’ Alliance, a national renewable energy group, and the Indiana Farm Bureau are showcasing the benefits that small-scale renewable energy is delivering to rural Indiana communities.

The Bureau spotlighted recent initiatives in a daylong tour of northern Indiana Thursday. The tour included visits to a Danville landfill-to-gas operation, a solar farm in Montgomery County, and the nine-year-old “BioTown” experiment in Reynolds.

It also included a stop at Jasper County’s Fair Oaks dairy farm, which is almost entirely self-sustaining.

Bureau president Don Villwock says forms of renewable energy such as solar and wind farms, which are often located on farmland, benefit farmers.

Media report prepared by Cater Communications;
Media outreach conducted by the Indiana Farm Bureau, the Jasper REMC, the 25x’25 Alliance & Cater Communications
“We do have a few solar farms starting to sprout up,” says Villwock. “We have a new one in Tipton County that just recently started. So we’re really on the forefront, and Purdue University is probably the leading cellulosic research institute in the country.” Villwock adds that ethanol now accounts for 40 percent of Hoosier farmers’ corn production.


This article was also picked up by:

http://www.midwestenergynews.com/digest/ (See the October 10th edition of the Midwest Energy News Daily Digest)
Ethanol Now A Big Cash Crop For Hoosier Farmers

BY NETWORK INDIANA

Indiana farmers' biggest cash crops now include not just corn and soybeans, but energy.

Indiana Farm Bureau president Don Villwock says ethanol now accounts for 40-percent of Hoosier farmers' corn production.

And he says other forms of renewable energy benefit farmers as well.

"We do have a few solar farms starting to sprout up," says Villwock. "We have a new one in Tipton County that just recently started. So we're really on the forefront, and Purdue University is probably the leading cellulosic research institute in the country."

The Farm Bureau and the agriculture-and-environment renewable energy coalition 25x25 spotlighted some of those initiatives with a daylong tour of northern Indiana.

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Renewables now comprise 11-percent of American energy production, with more than half that amount coming from different forms of biomass.

http://wbaa.org/post/ethanol-now-big-cash-crop-hoosier-farmers
Renewable Energy Becoming One of Indiana's Biggest Cash Crops

Eric Berman
Oct. 09, 2014

Indiana farmers' biggest cash crops now include not just corn and soybeans, but energy.

Indiana Farm Bureau president Don Villwock says ethanol now accounts for 40-percent of Hoosier farmers' corn production. And he says other forms of renewable energy benefit farmers as well. Solar and wind farms are often located on farmland, and Indiana is a national leader in research into other forms of biofuels, from cellulosic ethanol to biodiesel.

The Farm Bureau and the agriculture-and-environment renewable energy coalition 25x25 spotlighted some of those initiatives with a daylong tour of northern Indiana, with visits to a Danville landfill-to-gas operation, a solar farm in Montgomery County, the nine-year-old "BioTown" experiment in Reynolds, and Jasper County's Fair Oaks dairy farm, which is almost entirely self-sustaining.

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TWEETREACH SNAPSHOT FOR

#INRuralEnergy

ESTIMATED REACH

6,138
ACCOUNTS REACHED

EXPOSURE

8,574 IMPRESSIONS

ACTIVITY

12 TWEETS

7 CONTRIBUTORS

3 DAYS

TOP CONTRIBUTORS

3.4k IMPRESSIONS

@infarmbureau

5 RETWEETS

@fbkyle

7 MENTIONS

@fbkyle

MOST RETWEETED TWEETS

Kyle Cline @ibKyle

IN L'I Gov Ellspermann addressing #INRuralEnergy

Kyle Cline @ibKyle

Visited the only community solar project in Indiana in Linden as part of #INRuralEnergy Tour, more coming

Purdue Ag Econ @PurdueAgEcon

KIT @RayHer Dr Wells Tyner speaking on PPE & more future biotech, part of #INRuralEnergy Tour

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Major report prepared by Cater Communications; media outreach conducted by the Indiana Farm Bureau, the Jasper REMC, the 25x25 Alliance & Cater Communications.
Listening to Retired Air Force General Donald Hoffman address the #25x25 gathering this morning. He believes national security is closely tied to energy, and renewable energy is vital to our future. Applauds #25x25 group for their efforts. — at Indiana Farm Bureau Incorporated.

National leaders gather in Indiana for renewable energy conference. Lt. Gov Ellspermann outlines Indiana’s progress on renewable energy.