

## Editor's Note

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

From falling gas prices, debate over the Keystone Pipeline, and a push in the popularity of solar power, energy is on the mind of every individual. The energy industry serves a crucial function in the global economy. It is an essential component for a range of industries, from manufacturing, transportation, communication, to information technology. Despite our need for energy, its production and consumption comes with costs. The traditional reliance on non-renewable fossil fuels as an energy source has had extremely negative effects on the environment. The impact of environmental disasters resulting from energy production—BP oil spill and West Virginia chemical spill—compels the public to call for new sources of energy. New sources of energy are constantly being researched and developed and as more of these sources become viable options, it is important to inform the public of the advantages of source, but also the challenges that it may encounter.

The mission of *Sustainable Development Law and Policy* is to provide a broad range of information in order to allow our readers to make informed decisions on sustainability and development issues. This issue provides divergent views about the sources of energy in order to provide a broader perspective in the debate for new energy sources. Two of the articles highlight energy sources that are outside the main discussion as alternative energy sources. Roy Partain discusses the potential of commercial methane extraction as a viable energy source while insisting on planning for the environmental, physical, social, and political risks that are associated with the source's development. Carla Santos and Alisha Falberg argue for using woody biomass for heating, which surprisingly is a large portion of energy costs, and adopting policies to mitigate environmental concerns.

This issue also explores some of the more popular alternatives to oil and gas, namely nuclear and renewable energy. Robert Volpe argues for changes in the ratemaking policy to promote nuclear energy development in the United States. Finally, James Parker-Flynn argues that conflicting state policies regarding renewable energy has created a race to the middle in terms of regulation, creating an increase or stagnant net emissions of greenhouse gases.

The features articles discuss broad issues related to energy including risks of nuclear energy, environmental impact of Mexico's energy reform, fracking in New Mexico, and capturing waste heat in London's Underground.

## Features:

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*by Katrina Tomecek*
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*by Nicholas Thies*

With energy consumption on the rise, the need for a variety of alternative environmentally friendly sources is crucial for efficiency. We hope that this issue widens the debate for creating an energy efficient society through environmental friendly regulations. On behalf of my staff, I would like to thank all the authors for sharing their articles and helping us engage in a thoughtful and informative discussion on energy. I would also like to thank my staff for their hard work and efforts that continue to make *Sustainable Development Law and Policy* a leading publication in addressing sustainable development issues.



Jacqueline Niba