Acadia Center

Looking Forward

Mission

Acadia Center is a non-profit, research and advocacy organization committed to advancing the clean energy future. Acadia Center is at the forefront of efforts to build clean, low-carbon and consumer-friendly economies. Acadia Center provides accurate and reliable information, and offers a real-world and comprehensive approach to problem solving through innovation and collaboration.

Strategy & Approach

Acadia Center does intensive, original research and focuses on policy approaches that demonstrate a better pathway forward. The organization's key strategies include working across jurisdictions, partnerships with non-traditional allies and promoting ideas that create benefits for consumers and the economy.

Expertise & Experience

Acadia Center's staff members are respected experts in economics, policy, and law who combine a passion for public service with diligence and professional ability, making them uniquely effective agents for progress and change. Acadia Center's Board of Directors and Advisory Council are dynamic and diverse professionals who offer their guidance to strengthen Acadia Center's impact, connections and organizational capacity. For full list and bios see: Acadiacenter.org/about-us/people.

Vision & Leadership

Acadia Center takes a positive yet ambitious approach. It is innovative and skilled at finding ways to break out of cycles of debate to advance progress. Acadia Center creates roadmaps to a vision of a cleaner future, does the analysis that re-routes discussion toward alternatives and rallies broad, non-traditional alliances for support. This analysis and advocacy is rigorous; Acadia Center knows what works and does what it will take to make that happen. What follows is a summary of the organization's core initiatives and latest priorities.

EnergyVision demonstrates that reforms in four key sectors will help states reach 80% GHG emissions reductions by 2050.

EnergyVision

Acadia Center's EnergyVision presents the framework for a clean energy, low-carbon future focused on using advances in clean electricity – phasing out fossil fuels – to heat buildings and power cars. This clean energy future empowers consumers, lowers greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increases economic productivity. EnergyVision demonstrates that reforms achieved simultaneously in four key sectors will help states reach 80% GHG emissions reductions by 2050 – a crucial target for addressing climate change.

Acadia Center is focused on crafting and implementing the needed policy reforms in those four areas: electrification of vehicles and buildings; clean energy; power grid modernization; and energy efficiency.

TRANSPORTATION & ELECTRIFICATION

Challenge The transportation sector is one of the largest sources of GHG emissions. Fossil fuels that power our vehicles are dirty and expensive. Emissions from this sector are growing more rapidly than any other, and progress toward reductions is slower.

Opportunity Thanks to technology advances, electric vehicles (EVs) are increasingly available and attractive in the marketplace. EVs cost about half as much to operate as traditional gasoline cars, and emit nearly 64% fewer GHG emissions. Electric vehicles have the potential to play an exciting new role as energy storage devices in an updated clean energy power grid.

Goal Acadia Center will advance a unique three-pronged strategy to reduce GHGs in the transportation sector: **a)** continued improvement in vehicle fuel economy, including EV development; **b)** promotion of cleaner fuels policies; and **c)** reducing dependency on personal vehicles by promoting better land use planning and transportation options. Acadia Center will work for 10% of new passenger vehicle sales in New England to be electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles by 2020 and for transportation fuels sold in New England to be 10% less carbon intensive by 2020.

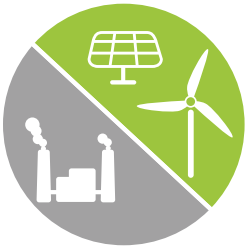
BUILDINGS & ELECTRIFICATION

Challenge Too many buildings continue to rely on expensive, high-carbon heating fuels. If homes and businesses remain locked in to those systems, consumers will face increasing costs and emissions.

Opportunity Improvements in building heating and cooling equipment and appliances offer viable opportunities to use increasingly clean and efficient electric devices to replace fossil fuel systems. For example, high efficiency heat pumps can cut total energy needed to heat a home by 60% at competitive costs while emitting far less CO_2 than natural gas.

Goal Increasing investments in high-efficiency electric heat will bring direct savings to consumers and will avoid the risk of over-reliance on fossil fuels and costly investments in transmission infrastructure or pipelines. Acadia Center will continue to advocate expansion of efficiency programs and state policies so that they offer incentives to consumers and help increase adoption of these cleaner, cost-effective technologies.

CLEAN ENERGY



Challenge Energy production is a leading contributor to climate change. The region needs updated policies across all energy-producing sectors in order to cost-effectively reduce the impact on the climate and local environment.

Opportunity Renewable energy costs are dropping rapidly, a trend that is expected to continue. There is enormous potential for additional renewable energy – both for larger generating stations like wind farms and for small, distributed systems like rooftop solar. There has never been a better time to promote a significant increase in clean renewable power.

Goal Acadia Center will continue work on removing current barriers in the power grid and regulatory system that hinder increased renewable energy, including strengthening and expanding the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and updating renewable portfolio standards (RPS) to increase demand for renewable resources. Acadia Center will promote policies to level the playing field so that renewable power can compete fairly and flourish and measure the potential for clean power options to meet our energy needs cost-effectively. Acadia Center will also advance market-based solutions that put a price on pollution in order to drive emissions reductions.

With the right decisions and investments, consumers will have greater control over energy use.

POWER GRID MODERNIZATION

Challenge Many areas face urgent, expensive and long-lasting decisions about how to upgrade and expand aging energy infrastructure; the impacts will be transformative for our economic and environmental future. The electricity system is currently built around large power plants that distribute power along a vast infrastructure of poles and wires. The so-called "one-way" approach to power delivery is outdated, inflexible and unresponsive to consumer needs. The power grid is increasingly vulnerable to storm outages and supply disruptions. The system costs more than it needs to and customers foot the bill. Now – in order to save money and reduce GHG emissions – the decisions about power grid financial investments must be aligned with the Northeast's renewable energy and carbon reduction goals.

Opportunity The key to a clean energy future is a modernized power grid that allows the use of new technologies and consumer engagement. States and regulators are making decisions now about our energy future and power grid. These decisions must be aligned with newly available energy technologies that are small in scale, installed at our homes and businesses, and cleaner and cheaper to operate. The power grid must adapt to an energy future oriented towards local distributed energy systems located at our homes and businesses.

Goal Acadia Center is developing a policy vision for comprehensive, consistent utility incentive framework that will result in a fully integrated, flexible, low-carbon consumer-friendly energy network. Acadia Center's UtilityVision is a detailed map of grid reforms designed to shift utilities away from the "one-way" power delivery model and move toward an interactive, networked system. With the right decisions and investments, consumers will have greater control over energy use within and around the buildings they occupy. Developing and implementing this innovative framework will lead to aggressive GHG reductions. AcadiaCenter will work to bring together all stakeholders to crystalize a vision of the future grid and advance the policy changes needed.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

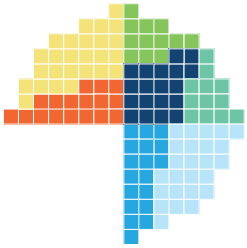
Challenge Energy use in buildings accounts for at least one-third of all emissions. As a result of political opportunities and Acadia Center's tenacious advocacy, states such as Massachusetts and Rhode Island have significantly increased their investments in electric and natural gas energy efficiency and are now national leaders. The challenge is building forward from this strong foundation to reach even greater savings, maximizing efficiency investments that are available and cost effective.

Opportunity Energy efficiency is the lowest cost and cleanest energy resource. Investments in efficiency equipment like lighting, appliances and industrial motors reduce consumer energy bills. They reduce the need for expensive energy infrastructure like transmission lines and power plants. Already, efficiency investments in key states have deferred the need for nearly half a billion dollars in new energy projects. Utility ratepayers have received significant economic and environmental benefits for these investments.

Energy efficiency is the lowest cost, cleanest fuel available.

Goal Acadia Center's goal is to solidify energy efficiency as a cornerstone of state and regional energy supply and policy. We will work to ensure that programs are effective, well-funded and reach as many people as possible with the highest possible energy and cost savings for each participant. Energy efficiency must be a core part of any state or regional climate change strategy. Acadia Center will continue to play a leadership role on state energy efficiency stakeholder councils and leads policy reforms, updates and implementation to reinforce the role of efficiency as a key resource.

ACADIA CLIMATE & ENERGY ANALYSIS (CLEAN) CENTER



Challenge Effective advocacy requires accurate, compelling information and the ability to respond quickly to new questions or challenges. Energy and economic issues involve many variables and demand up-to-date data. Stakeholders and policy-makers must have access to tools for making good decisions. Acadia CLEAN Center provides one of the organization's core assets: credible, sophisticated data and analysis used to shape and advance policy approaches and advocacy efforts.

Opportunity Reliable and clear analysis cuts through confusion and debate to get to solutions for urgent problems. Acadia CLEAN Center moves policy questions toward action and implementation by answering pressing questions, supporting good ideas, de-bunking myths and misinformation, and finding common ground for diverse stakeholders.

Goal Acadia Center works to maintain the database of energy and emissions information as one of the most extensive and up-to-date in the region. Focusing on climate change policy in the energy, transportation and land use sectors, Acadia CLEAN Center presents data in accessible visualizations, graphs, maps, trend reports and more. Recent and upcoming original studies will explore: value of solar energy; winter heating cost trends and solutions; cost-benefits of electric vehicles; potential alternatives to fossil fuel infrastructure expansion; market-based emissions reductions measures; and economic benefits of energy efficiency.

LOCAL-LEVEL ADVOCACY & POLICY MODELS

Acadia Center continues to look for opportunities to reduce emissions and apply innovative programs for high impact. To that end, the organization's work in 2015 looks to go farther and deeper at the municipal level and in working with partner groups to apply best practices and good policy.

Municipal Energy and Climate Planning at the municipal level, both in urban and rural areas, is a promising channel for implementation of climate and energy solutions across sectors. Acadia Center will draw on experience in energy and emissions analysis and policy design to explore new initiatives related to electric vehicle adoption and infrastructure; intersections of land use planning and climate goals; and developing local clean energy resources.

Scalable Models and Best Practices Acadia Center is at the front lines of precedent-setting policy innovations, including all cost-effective efficiency and the RGGI cap and trade program. These policies are nationally recognized, successful models. Acadia Center will develop best practices educational materials and work with partners nationwide on opportunities to expand and replicate these solutions.

Acadia Center is at the front lines of precedent-setting policy innovations that are nationally recognized, successful policy models.

Supporting Acadia Center's Work. Acadia Center receives support from individuals and from private and family foundations. Such generosity makes our work possible. Find information on how to donate and our donor privacy policy on our website: Acadiacenter.org/support-acadia-center.

Acadia Center has been listed on Charity Navigator's list of "Top 10 Charities Worth Watching" in the United States and has received Charity Navigator's highest 4-star rating eight years in a row for effective use of revenue for program purposes. To learn more, please see Acadia Center's profile at Charity Navigator. Charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=search.summary&orgid=10838

Acadia Center

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