

Except from Greentech Media, November 5, 2008

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Analysts Call Obama Election a Win for Greentech

Cleantech companies hope President-elect Barack Obama, plus a more Democratic Congress, will usher in a new era for renewables and other green technologies. But analysts also say the work is just beginning.

by: [Jennifer Kho](#)

A number of greentech industry insiders are cheering the election of Democratic candidate Sen. Barack Obama as the next U.S. president.

"It's obviously outstanding news for the clean-energy sector," said Ethan Zindler, head of North American research for New Energy Finance. "An Obama win, coupled with pickups in the House and Senate for Democrats, is really good news."

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Robert Wilder, CEO of Wildershires, which manages three energy indices, said he was "pretty excited" about the outcome of the election.

"We're looking at not just having, for the first time, a real cheerleader for clean energy in the Oval Office, but also at having a House and Senate that are probably going to be to the left of the president," Wilder said. "[Obama] has already talked about energy independence in a real way - it's not been the throwaway line we've gotten since Richard Nixon - and I think he really means it."

The question is how Congress will pay for what will doubtless be very expensive programs, said Wilder, who attended California's Occidental College with Obama

"Some pundits are saying it will be too expensive to implement [these programs,]" he said. "But if you look at a cap-and-trade [program] or carbon

taxes, which some see as just punishing dirty fuels, they also can be revenue generating. Not only will coal get dinged by the weight of a potential carbon tax or cap-and-trade, but it will pay for some of these programs."

Wilder said he thinks Obama will be mindful of keeping new legislation moderate to avoid repeating what he called the mistakes of the first two years of former President Clinton, which he said ushered in a much more conservative Congress.

"They will be clean and green – far different from [the Bush administration] – and I think the country is really thirsty for this kind of change," he said. "It's amazing to me how desperate people are in America for leadership in clean and green technologies. But President Obama is going to be working to retain this Democratic majority far longer than the next two years."

With a new president in the White House, the country could be on the cusp on a new green economy, Wilder said.

"We're looking to a greener economy in which we can regain the leadership we gave up in the '80s and sell to China and to other countries," he said. "Typically all we have is services and everything is made elsewhere and we buy it, but it doesn't have to be that way. We could sell green goods under President Obama."

But he added that the new green economy will result in some losers as well.

"I think the losers are going to be trying very hard to put forth the message that their loss is America's loss and are going to try to show that moving from dirty fuels to cleaner fuels is a bad thing," he said. "But people are smart and know that coal is dirty."

"There are people who don't have voices now who are going to have these new green jobs in five to 10 years and are going to be in better industries that could potentially export to the rest of the world. It just takes some leadership."

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