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### U.S. Closing Gap on Rest of World Regarding RNG Development

NEW YORK--Other parts of the world are ahead of the U.S. when it comes to renewable natural gas (RNG), but the country is closing the gap, the head of an organization focused on the fuel said this week.

"In terms of number of projects, certainly Europe is miles ahead," Matt Tomich, president of nonprofit environmental group Energy Vision, told OPIS. "But the U.S. is catching up."

Tomich, speaking at an event at which the organization distributed environmental leadership awards, said that the U.S. has more than 250 operational RNG projects, at least 115 more under development and "the potential for thousands of projects to be developed over the next decade."

The U.S. has an opportunity to play a leadership role globally in the endeavor, Tomich said, especially with a large agricultural industry and an extensive network of gas transmission.

"It lends itself to scaling RNG quickly," he added.

Technology developed in Europe often gets commercialized in the U.S., Tomich said, and "there's no reason to believe that that can't happen with RNG; that seems to be the trajectory that that we're starting to be on."

"I have high confidence in the ability of this country to take the lead with all of the innovation and entrepreneurship and commercial success that we've seen in other industries," he added. "The U.S. is poised to be a leader."

Tomich cited the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and "the role that that can and likely will play in making this an attractive investment that is largely de-risked."

He lauded steps taken by the Biden Administration.

"Not necessarily speaking specifically to RNG, but the incentive structures and opportunities that are provided by Build Back Better and the IRA are the best we've ever seen," he said.

"RNG and biogas are included and the tax incentives plus clean fuel production credits that will apply to RNG make this a very attractive investment opportunity for the next decade," he added. "Treasury has not yet come out with guidance, but based on what's in the legislation, all things RNG and biogas are supported to a great degree and that alone is a far cry from where we were a few years ago."

Tomich referred to several states or regions that have been seeking the possibility of establishing low carbon fuel standard (LCFS) programs like the ones out west.

"It is certainly a priority here in New York," he said. "It's being considered and pursued in New Jersey. In the Upper Midwest, there's an effort, and there are efforts in New Mexico.

"Today, it is really the West Coast that has the existing programs driving the opportunities. Our hope is certainly that others follow suit."

Tomich said that hopes for the development of a national LCFS program are "perhaps ambitious at this point," but said such a move "could in effect replace the Renewable Fuel Standard over time."

"It's our hope that that comes to fruition, sooner rather than later," he added.

In the meantime, there is potential for RNG to grow significantly, according to Tomich.

"If you look at sort of the technical potential based on the feedstock and known existing technology," he said, "the opportunity is 20 times at least what it is today in terms of production potential domestically."

--Reporting by Michael Schneider