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**PRESS  
MATERIAL**

**PALMER TAKES INTERNET MESSAGE  
TO CAPITOL HILL**

(Arlington, VA – July 15, 1999) At the invitation of Chairman David McIntosh (R-IN), Western Fuels Association, Inc., general manager and chief executive officer Fred Palmer took his “The Internet Begins With Coal” message to Capitol Hill in testimony today to the House of Representatives Subcommittee on National Economic Growth, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs.

Using a recent U.S. Department of Commerce report about the emerging digital economy as a notable example, Palmer told the subcommittee, “Nowhere in the Commerce report – in fact nowhere to the best of my knowledge – is anyone considering the burgeoning electricity appetite of telecommunications and information technology.” Sharing a panel with Environmental Defense Fund executive director Fred Krupp, Palmer charged that proponents of “early action credits” to be used in building pressure for eventual ratification of the Kyoto Protocol would shortly find their seductive proposal can’t be done, won’t work, won’t matter and be a fruitless impediment to the Information Age.

“Neither early nor later action can achieve the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals set forth by global warming advocates,” he says. “Starting early buys nothing except an early departure down a dead-end road.” With fossil fuels supplying 85% of the energy used in the U.S. and their use unavoidably resulting in emission of carbon dioxide into earth’s atmosphere, reductions in fossil fuels only can have one important effect: *depressing the U.S. economy*, contends Palmer.

(more)

Citing a recent study commissioned by Greening Earth Society, of which Palmer is President, he told the subcommittee that preliminary estimates reveal that the electricity appetite of equipment related to Internet use are responsible for 8% of U.S. electricity consumption and probably account for one-third to one-half of all growth in electricity demand over the last decade. "The story contained in *The Internet Begins With Coal: A Preliminary Exploration of the Impact of the Internet on Electricity Consumption* is lost in the rhetoric of the power of 'bits' to transform industries. And, sad to say, it's lost on Vice President Gore and Secretary of Commerce Daley," admits Palmer.

Capping, rationing, limiting, taxing or prohibiting carbon dioxide emissions not only attacks the longest peacetime economic expansion in history, says Palmer, it raises other important considerations. "To wire the world, we will have to electrify the world. Is connectivity to be rationed? How could we possibly avoid increasing the gap between those who are online today and those who are not?" he asks. "Renewable, non-carbon-based electricity generating technologies have their place, but they can never provide sufficient electric density to power the 24-by-7 uninterruptible power source e-commerce and high-tech Information Age devices require."