

Senator Maria Cantwell Helps to Light Northwest's Smart Grid Demo Project **Local News**

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SEATTLE, Wash. - Highlighted by appearances from Senators Patty Murray, D-WA and Maria Cantwell, D-WA, a press conference at the University of Washington in Seattle officially kicked off the "go-live" phase of the Pacific Northwest Smart Grid Demonstration Project.



"Lighting up the largest smart grid demonstration in the nation" was the official theme of this event, which was part of the university's overall Sustainability Week celebration. But many of the event's speakers focused on a more subtle aspect of the project — the unparalleled collaboration that brought such a large and diverse group of partners together. As Senator Cantwell remarked, "Looking around this room, it's clear we have the talent, technology and tools to become a leader in the energy economy of the future. So congratulations to all of the project's partners and the students who are making this possible."

BPA's Deputy Administrator Bill Drummond summed up how the regional cooperation started at the top, with our elected officials and trickled down to the heart and soul of the smart grid project — the people who are implementing the technologies and programs in their homes, businesses and even dormitories.

"I want to thank Senator Murray for her leadership on the Appropriations Committee, for securing the funding that took this project from a small demonstration to a major initiative," Drummond said.

"And I want to thank Senator Cantwell for championing smart grid, including sponsoring legislations that provided framework for smart grid demonstrations nationally. I also want to thank our utilities, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, and our end-use partners — the consumers of electricity — for making this a collaborative effort. The Pacific Northwest is providing national leadership in sustainability and we couldn't do it without all of these dedicated partners."

Battelle's Senior Vice President Mike Kluse touted the Pacific Northwest's predisposition in leading the nation's smart grid transformation.

"The PNW Demo is a first-of-its-kind opportunity to bring together the entire ecosystem of partners: national labs and premier research institutions like the University of Washington, technology companies, students, and the utilities themselves, to engineer the grid of the future," noted Kluse.

"It is this kind of groundbreaking collaboration that will be needed going forward to overcome the challenges we face in modernizing our grid. And this region is ideally suited to lead the way."

A utility customer of Seattle City Light, The University of Washington proved to be the perfect spot for the kick-off, with enthusiastic students sharing the details of their projects with dignitaries. Their contagious passion for sustainability was the highlight of numerous news reports.

For example, Oregon Public Broadcasting led their coverage with a student showing Senator Cantwell an energy monitoring device attached to lamps that she controlled with her smart phone. The Seattle Times focused on the students' excitement in helping the university cut its energy bills.

For University of Washington Provost, Ana Mari Cauce, pride for the students, and the smart grid demonstration, was obvious in her remarks. "The University of Washington is recognized as a national leader in sustainability within the higher education community," she said.

"The project provides an exciting opportunity for testing how 21st century technology can reduce energy consumption. Given our students' keen interest in the environment, it is appropriate that much of our research on smart grids will occur within our residence halls and that the initial research will be conducted by students in our program on the environment."

The Oct. 24 kick-off event in Seattle was the first in a series of celebrations around the region, as milestones help demonstrate the project's success.

One of BPA's major roles in the project is developing the business case for smart grid investments, which will inform the Northwest what major infrastructure and technology investments will provide the greatest value to ratepayers in the long run. The regional pilot project will help the Pacific Northwest make those decisions. And considering the scale of the project, the results of the business case will also serve as a resource to other regions across the country.

For an overview of the Pacific Northwest Smart Grid Demonstration Project, visit www.pnwsmartgrid.org. For more on the University of Washington/Seattle City Light project, click [here](#).