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**Michigan Public Service Commissioner Monica Martinez Wins  
MEEA Inspiring Efficiency Award for Leadership**

Chicago – For her tireless commitment to energy efficient policies and programs, Michigan Public Service Commissioner Monica Martinez has been awarded the 2011 Inspiring Efficiency Leadership Award by the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA).

Since she was appointed to the Michigan Public Service Commission in 2005 by then-Governor Jennifer Granholm, Commissioner Martinez has strongly advocated programs to support energy efficiency in Michigan as well as across the Midwest.

Martinez was instrumental in the passage of Michigan’s Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy Act (PA 295), which created statewide Energy Optimization Standards and required Michigan utilities to meet energy savings targets.

She also spearheaded efforts to promote asymmetrical decoupling efforts, a process that unlinks energy sales from utility revenues, thereby allowing utilities to retain their profitability while increasing energy efficiency and reducing total energy sales to their customers.

Another cause Martinez has championed is the expansion and use of Michigan’s Low Income and Energy Efficiency Fund. During her watch, funding has increased to \$90 million annually, up from \$44 million when the program launched in 2001-2002.

According to Michigan Public Service Commission spokesperson Lisa Pappas, Commissioner Martinez has focused specifically on the portion of the program that provides rebates for energy efficient equipment and consumer education to reduce energy use and costs over time.

“The temptation is to use the funds to help low-income residents pay energy bills that are due tomorrow, but Commissioner Martinez realizes our state is better off by giving our citizens the tools that allow them to ultimately reduce their energy use and their energy bills in the long run,” said Pappas. “It’s the difference between giving a man a fish and teaching him to fish.”

The award was accepted by Commissioner Martinez at MEEA’s annual Midwest Energy Solutions Conference, [www.meeaconference.org](http://www.meeaconference.org), on January 13 in Chicago.

“MEEA is proud to recognize Commissioner Martinez’s leadership in promoting energy efficiency in the Midwest,” said MEEA Acting Executive Director Jay Wrobel. “She is proof that one person can truly make a difference.”

Bestowed annually, MEEA’s Leadership Award is presented to an organization or leader who has served as a strong leader in support of energy efficiency in their region.

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Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, [www.mwalliance.org](http://www.mwalliance.org), is a collaborative network advancing energy efficiency in the Midwest to support sustainable economic development and environmental preservation.

MEEA promotes the market transformation of energy efficiency technologies, processes and best practices within a 13-state area, through policy advocacy, program design and facilitation and piloting of energy technologies. MEEA bridges the gap between policy adoption and program implementation.