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Photo Release -- Orion Energy System's Apollo(R) Light Pipe Included in Landmark Renewable Energy Legislation Signed by Governor Doyle Today

Amendment to State's RPS Will Create Jobs; Position Wisconsin as an Energy Leader

MANITOWOC, Wis., May 19, 2010 (GlobeNewswire via COMTEX News Network) -- Orion Energy Systems, Inc. (NYSE Amex:OESX) thanks Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle for his leadership in signing into law forward-thinking legislation that will improve the environment and create jobs statewide.

A photo accompanying this release is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=7503>

Today, Doyle signed the Wisconsin Energy Employment Act, or Senate Bill 273, amending the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard to include technologies like Orion's direct-use Apollo(R) solar light pipes, among others.

Orion Energy Systems has been a strong proponent of the legislation since it was introduced in the state Legislature in August.

"Orion is pleased that Gov. Doyle recognizes the importance of the bill to this Wisconsin manufacturer and workers across the state," Orion CEO Neal Verfuert said about Doyle's signing. "The legislation means that Wisconsin will soon become the first state to recognize certain products that displace electricity as true renewable resources and a first step in getting the Apollo(R) recognized as a renewable resource nationwide."

The Renewable Portfolio Standard, or RPS, requires state utilities to acquire 10 percent of their energy needs from renewable sources by 2015. Prior to Doyle signing the legislation, the sun wasn't considered a renewable energy source, which prevented Orion's light pipe technology from helping the state meet the 10 percent mandate.

The Apollo(R) solar light pipe utilizes the sun's energy to illuminate a commercial, industrial or warehouse facility using no electricity. In addition to the Apollo(R) solar light pipe, SB 273 amends the RPS to include technologies like biomass, biogas, geothermal, solar hot water heating, synthetic gas, and certain fuel pellets. When used as an alternative to traditional fossil fuel or nuclear produced electricity, these alternative renewable sources can be used to fulfill a utility's renewable resource requirement.

The legislation is designed to provide jobs for Wisconsin workers, according to state representatives Ted Zigmunt, D-Francisc Creek, and Jim Soletski, D-Green Bay, who co-authored the Assembly bill. The Senate version was authored by Sens. Jeff Plale, D-South Milwaukee, Rob Cowles, R-Allouez, and Joe Leibham, R-Sheboygan.

It is estimated that the inclusion of the Apollo(R) solar light pipe in the RPS will generate 2.8 million hours of installation work for the construction industry, an area of the economy hit especially hard. These jobs will be developed statewide.

"SB 273 will have a major impact on businesses throughout Wisconsin, and positions manufacturers like Orion for further growth as utilities seek viable ways to meet the state's renewable standards," Verfuert said. "We believe the Apollo(R) solar light pipe is the lowest cost entrant to the renewable marketplace and will provide Wisconsin businesses with substantial energy reductions and cost savings."

Doyle recommended that Orion's Apollo(R) solar light pipes be included as a qualifying technology in the state's RPS after he saw the benefits of the technology firsthand during a visit to Orion's Manitowoc manufacturing center.

The Orion bill was heavily supported by labor organizations, including the AFL-CIO, United Brotherhood of Carpenters Union, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and operating engineers. Major businesses statewide also supported the bill, which carries with it a lengthy bipartisan list of co-sponsors in both the Senate and Assembly.

For more information, contact Kevin Crawford, Orion Energy Systems' senior vice president of corporate communications and government affairs, at (920) 917-9119.

Orion has deployed its energy management systems in 5,612 facilities across North America, including 120 of the Fortune 500 companies. Since 2001, Orion technology has displaced more than 527 megawatts, saving customers more than \$856 million and reducing indirect carbon dioxide emissions by 7.3 million tons.

Orion Energy Systems, Inc. (NYSE Amex:OESX) is a leading power technology enterprise that designs, manufactures and implements energy management systems, consisting primarily of high-performance, energy-efficient lighting platforms, intelligent wireless control systems and direct renewable solar technology for commercial and industrial customers without compromising their operations. For more information, visit www.oesx.com.

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