

# FASTCOMPANY.COM

Where ideas and people meet

Article location: <http://www.fastcompany.com/blog/ariel-schwartz/sustainability/bank-we-can-believe>

March 25, 2009

Tags: [Ethnomics](#), [green bank](#), [coalition for green bank](#), [reed hundert](#)

## A Bank We Can Believe In?

By [Ariel Schwartz](#)



Banks have gotten a bad rap recently, and for good reason. The FDIC's [Failed Bank List](#) [1] is rife with private banks that have been flattened in the past two years, and we all know about the myriad [bankrupt investment banks](#) [2]. But now U.S. Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) has proposed a bank we can believe in.

The congressman introduced The Green Bank Act of 2009 this week. If passed, the act would create a tax-exempt bank owned by the U.S. with the ability to provide financing to clean energy and energy-efficiency projects such as wind farms, solar installations, and transmission lines. The U.S. would give the proposed bank \$10 billion in initial funds through Green Bonds issued by the Treasury Department.

That \$10 billion could be instrumental in expanding our renewable energy infrastructure, according to Reed Hundt, co-chair of the Coalition for Green Bank. CGB [estimates](#) [3] that the bank's funds could provide 15GW of clean energy, reduce annual energy costs in the U.S. by \$22.5 billion, and cut carbon emissions by 26.9 million tons--not to mention the jobs created by companies with the newfound ability to fund cleantech projects.

Incidentally, the proposed green bank won't actually be called "The Green Bank." That name is already [taken](#) [4] by a 119 year-old commercial bank in Tennessee. Instead, Van Hollen's bank will go by a more descriptive name: the National Clean Energy Lending Authority. Not quite as catchy, but it gets the point across.

[Via [Renewable Energy World](#) [5]]

---

### Links:

[1] <http://www.fdic.gov/bank/individual/failed/banklist.html>

[2] <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/15/business/15lehman.html>

[3] <http://www.foxbusiness.com/story/industry-coalition-hails-congress-green-bank-act/>

[4] <http://www.greenbankusa.com/home/home>

[5] <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/article/2009/03/green-bank-act-of-2009-introduced-in-us-house>