



For Immediate Release

Contact: Anne Robertson/Kendra States
The Lavidge Company
(480) 998-2600
arobertson@lavidge.com

**NAJAFI COMPANIES COMMITS UP TO \$100 MILLION TO ITS NEW
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY START-UP COMPANY:
*Energy Capital Investments, LLC to invest in Broad Range of Industry
Initiatives***

Phoenix, Ariz. (Dec. 17, 2007) – Najafi Companies, LLC announced today that it will provide up to \$100 million dollars to its new start-up portfolio company, Energy Capital Investments, LLC (ECI). ECI will deploy the funds as investment capital across a range of energy projects including solar, geo-thermal, biomass and other forms of alternative energy. The company will operate as an investor, originating and acquiring alternative and renewable energy projects with the goal of building substantial portfolios in each of its focus markets.

“This is a very exciting venture for us, and we’ve pulled together a first class management team to spearhead it,” said Mr. Jahm Najafi, Chief Executive Officer of Phoenix-based Najafi Companies, a private investment firm that takes a long-term approach to its select investments nationwide.

“We spent a great deal of time evaluating the most effective way to enter this marketplace not only to take advantage of the explosive growth opportunities, but also to participate, in a direct and meaningful way, in providing solutions to an ever-increasing energy demand. ECI’s team possesses the combined business backgrounds, specific knowledge, and successful track records within the energy sector that are vital to accomplishing our goals,” Najafi said.

Meet the Team

Mr. Clifford J. Svoboda will serve as ECI’s Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Svoboda began his career with Honeywell where he spent ten years and last served as Regional Director, Financial Industries Operations. He then joined Finalco, Inc., a firm specializing in tax shelter and income fund products where he served seven years as Marketing Director. Mr. Svoboda moved to Bell Atlantic Leasing, Inc. where he was General Manager for Central and Southern Operations. In 1993, he joined former associates at Information Leasing Corp, (ILC). ILC was sold to Provident Bank which, in 2004, was subsequently acquired by National City Bank. Mr. Svoboda served as Vice President, National City Commercial Capital, LLC and Executive Vice President, National City Energy Capital.

“As an enterprise, ECI is among the new kids on the block,” said Mr. Svoboda. “This position offers distinct advantages. We intend to bring innovation where appropriate and, to some extent, a fresh



perspective on development. There will, further, be a continuing emphasis on building and maintaining relationships as well as projects.”

William J. Garnett III will be a Principal at ECI. Mr. Garnett’s career experience includes positions in sales and management with IBM, investment banking background with Reynolds & Co. in both New York City and Los Angeles and, for over 20 years, operating and managing his own equipment leasing firm. Mr. Garnett was Senior Vice President of National City Energy Capital responsible for NCEC’s business development. His unit generated and managed numerous renewable energy transactions as well as originating vendor and utility energy services programs nationally. Mr. Garnett has been a panelist and speaker at energy industry conferences for over 25 years and, during his career, he has been involved in transactions valued at more than one billion dollars.

Mr. J. Scott Kuhn will be a Principal at ECI. Mr. Kuhn began his career with Harris Corporation where he held positions in sales and sales management. He joined Provident Bank in the Energy Capital Group in 2001 as Sales Manager after spending the three previous years as Sales Manager for Provident Financial Group in San Francisco. Mr. Kuhn served as Sales Director for National City Energy Capital where he specialized in structuring lending solutions for commercial and municipal entities focused on both renewable and energy efficiency projects.

Mr. Peter G. Eppeldauer will be ECI’s Controller and Finance Manager. Mr. Eppeldauer served as Senior Associate with Price Waterhouse Coopers from 1995 to 1998 when he joined Jefferies & Company, Inc. as Senior Equity Research Associate. In 2003, he joined Walt Disney Company in Corporate Finance as Senior Business Planner, where his responsibilities included overseeing \$1 billion in annual activity and budgeting for all domestic Disney businesses. From 2005 thru 2007, Mr. Eppeldauer was Assistant Vice President of Finance for Countrywide Financial in Pasadena, Ca.

Mr. Najafi concluded by saying, “Energy Capital Investments is positioned to grow dramatically in the coming years. The company has the funding, the management, the expertise and, most importantly, the commitment at all levels of the firm to the energy landscape and all of its important challenges and opportunities.”

About Najafi Companies

Najafi Companies is a private investment firm based in Phoenix, Arizona. The firm makes highly-selective investments up to \$2.5 billion in size in companies with strong management teams across a variety of industries, and often in industries out of popular favor. The firm takes a long-term view on its investments and focuses its efforts to create value through growth and superior performance. Najafi Companies funds investments with its principals’ capital, not through a fund. Free from the restrictions of a fund, the firm is able to move quickly and decisively when investing, and with no requirements to return capital to outside partners, Najafi Companies is able to make investments that create maximum value for the long term. For more information about Najafi Companies, visit www.najafi.com.