AUSTIN, Texas, April 7 /PRNewswire/ -- The Center for the Commercialization of Electric Technologies (CCET), a high-tech, electricity and university consortium, approved the first of what is expected to be a series of new commercialization projects that will put Texas on the road to reinventing the electric system of the 21st Century.

The $1.3 million project will provide the first of several "building blocks" to help automate and modernize the Texas electric grid. According to Milton Holloway, Chief Operating Officer, the award is a first step by the consortium to improve safety, reliability and security of the electric system and to enable the development of an untold number of new customer services and products for households and businesses.

Members of the CCET, a non-profit corporation formed in September 2005, are Freescale Semiconductor of Austin, Avistar of Albuquerque (a research and development arm of PNM Resources), CenterPoint Energy of Houston, TXU Electric Delivery of Dallas, Austin Energy of Austin, AEP Texas and a consortium of six Texas universities including Texas A&M University, The University of Texas at Austin, The University of Texas at Arlington, Texas Tech University, The University of Houston, and Texas A&M at Kingsville.

This initial project will study how to more precisely and accurately monitor grid performance and current flow through a global positioning system. CCET anticipates matching funds will be available from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Electric Power Research Institute in California. The project will also be a candidate for funding from the Texas Governor's Emerging Technology Fund. The project will be conducted by researchers at several of the member universities with participation by the CCET utility members for testing on their systems, and by support from Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT).

Peter Schulmeyer, Director of Strategy & Marketing, Freescale Semiconductor, said: "The future results of this collaborative effort will lead to a multitude of new consumer products and services that will benefit society in general, and the Texas economy in particular. We will improve the reliability of the power grid that is absolutely required to support the computer-driven economy of the future, make life easier and more enjoyable for consumers and improve the environment."