

Long-Awaited Energy Bill Passes the House

E-Newsletter December 2007

I am pleased to announce that today, after extensive negotiations, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 6, the Energy Independence and Security Act. H.R. 6 will reduce our dependence on foreign oil, create jobs, decrease consumer costs, and significantly cut the greenhouse gas emissions that are driving global warming. Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges of our time, and energy reform has been among my foremost priorities for years.

The bill includes a number of provisions that I feel should inspire hope. H.R. 6:

- Mandates that 15% of electricity be generated from renewable sources by 2020;
- Increases corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standard for the first time since 1975, requiring that vehicle manufacturers improve efficiency to an average of 35 miles per gallon by 2020;
- Promotes new motor fuels, from biodiesel to switchgrass ethanol, through a new renewable fuel standard (RFS);
- Offers tax credits for renewable energy, creating incentives for greener energy
 - H.R. 6 pays for itself by and repealing tax breaks to oil companies and closing loopholes in international law.

Americans will see positive impacts from this legislation. For example, next-generation cars with better fuel efficiency mean lower prices for consumers. In fact, the car efficiency standards alone are projected to save families \$700 to \$1000 a year at the pump in 2020. The daily drop in oil consumption would represent half of what we currently import from the Persian Gulf.

In addition, H.R. 6 will create tax credits for hybrids and promote smarter technology, from innovative dishwashers to greener building techniques. More broadly, H.R. 6 will establish the United States as a leader in green industry, as well as in protecting the planet. Alternative energy is already burgeoning in Western Massachusetts, and this bill could create up to 3 million green jobs in the next 10 years throughout the nation.

H.R. 6 represents years of effort and is endorsed by a broad range of groups. Given the unpredictability of international energy markets, the world's finite supply of fossil fuels, and the contributions of greenhouse gases to global warming, it is imperative that the United States develop a diverse energy portfolio.

Unfortunately, President Bush has threatened to veto the energy bill. However, I hope that my colleagues in the Senate will not cave to his pressure and will stand firm to pass H.R. 6.

I view this Energy bill as a bold step, but also a first step, towards combating global warming and addressing energy issues at home. As always, I invite you to contact me with any feedback, and I look forward to hearing from you.