

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

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Contact: Kevin O'Connell
202-225-6335

HINCHEY LAUDS ENERGY EFFICIENCY AT CROSBY SCHOOL, URGES BUSH TO PROMOTE SIMILAR SUCCESSSES

ULSTER - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey today joined Kingston School District officials at a press conference at the Edward R. Crosby School in Lake Katrine to draw attention to the benefits of energy efficiency and conservation. With assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy, the school district undertook an aggressive construction plan that has already saved over one million dollars in energy costs. Meanwhile, the Bush Administration has recommended drastic cuts to the Energy Department's budget for efficiency and conservation programs.

"The Kingston School District is setting a great example with this project," said Hinchey. "The federal government should be doing everything it can to provide schools, other companies, and individuals with the resources to effect this kind of energy savings."

Kingston City Schools estimates that the \$6.9 million project, one million dollars of which was provided by the Department of Energy, will pay for itself in just over eight years. Some 13,000 lights were replaced with energy efficient bulbs, several windows were replaced with special tinted glass that gets darker the more the sun shines on it and old, inefficient boilers were replaced with several smaller, more efficient ones. The heating is connected via computer to a central location and sensors were put on most lights to shut themselves off if no one is in the room for a period of time. In addition, the project has also prevented millions of pounds of carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxides from polluting the air.

"Successes like the one being experienced here in the Kingston area are being duplicated all over the country," added Hinchey. "And yet President Bush virtually ignores the benefits of conservation and efficiency in favor of more drilling that would be of no long term use to the country and would simply be a gift to the oil industry."

With the exception of a \$150 million increase for home weatherization, the Bush Administration proposes cutting almost every energy conservation account in the Department of Energy's budget. Without the weatherization increase, the proposed budget represents a cut of \$180 million in conservation programs. The administration's budget slashes funding for programs to make buildings more energy efficient and set appliance efficiency standards. Deep cuts are also made in funding for improving state and local building codes, and for R&D in buildings and transportation sectors.

Energy efficiency gains currently "produce" or recycle more energy than any other domestic source. It has also been a major force in the nation's economy. A federal investment of \$12 billion through 1999 has returned more than \$100 billion to the economy. Over the past 20 years, the energy cost savings of technologies developed by the Energy Department's Office of Building Technology is estimated at \$90.64 billion.

Hinchey is a cosponsor of several bills designed to promote increased energy efficiency and conservation. A list of these bills is attached.

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**Bills to Improve Energy Efficiency and Conservation Co-Sponsored by
U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey in the 107th Congress**

H.R. 778: Constructing energy efficient buildings could cut energy usage by as much as 50%. This bill will offer tax incentives to encourage the production and sale of technologically advanced, energy-efficient buildings and equipment. The incentives would apply to:

- efficient new residential buildings, saving 30% to 50% in energy costs compared to national building codes,
- efficient heating, cooling and water heating equipment,
- residential-scale solar hot water and photovoltaic equipment.

H.R. 876: This bill provides a 5-year extension of the credit for electricity produced from wind. Wind energy is the fastest growing source of power. U.S. wind capacity is expected to double in the next near. Wind energy costs have declined 80% over the past 20 years (currently 3-6 cents per kilowatt-hour with the tax credit, depending on the project size and wind speeds. Wind projects can be built in 6 -12 months and avoid the release of millions of tons of pollutants.

H.R. 954: This bill allows for "net metering," which enables individuals who generate electricity using fuel cells or renewables such as wind, solar, or biomass, to receive credit for the surplus electricity they put back into the grid.

H.R.1129: The High Performance Schools Act would help schools save money by promoting the construction of school buildings that take advantage of advanced energy conservation technologies, daylighting, and renewable energy. Funds would be allocated to state energy offices to award as grants to school districts for building design and technical assistance. These grants would be available to school districts that are faced with rising elementary and secondary school enrollments, that lack the resources to make major infrastructural investments, and that commit to working with the state agencies to produce school facilities that incorporate a "high performance" building approach. Some funds would also be available to state energy offices to facilitate private and public financing, promote the use of energy service companies, work with school administrations, students, and communities, and coordinate public benefit programs.

H.R.1275: This bill allows a credit against income tax for distributed generation fuel cells, which have many advantages over the existing power grid:

- By converting fuel directly to electricity on-site, they are far more efficient than traditional power plants.
- The distributed generation nature of fuel cells makes them more reliable than the power grid as they are not subject to transmission constraints and power outages.
- Fuel cells can help protect the air we breathe. In the northeast, our forests and waters continue to suffer the effects of acid rain from dirty power plants. In contrast, power from fuel cells produces virtually no air pollution.
- Fuel cells emit significantly less carbon dioxide emissions than fossil fuel power plants and can help us fight global warming and meet our obligation to the rest of the world to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

H.R.1316: This legislation would provide a tax credit to manufacturers of super energy-efficient clothes washers and refrigerators - if those appliances exceed new federal energy efficiency standards. This

would accelerate the production and market penetration of leading-edge appliance technologies that create significant environmental benefits. This is significant because clothes washers, clothes dryers and refrigerators account for approximately 15% of all household energy consumed in the U.S. annually.