



House of Representatives Joint Press Release

For Immediate Release
March 1, 2007

(Press contacts listed below)

Reps. Smith, Lewis, Blumenauer and Gilchrest Introduce Bill to Promote Green Housing

Bill Will Save Energy and Improve the Environment by Encouraging Sustainable Construction

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Reps. Adam Smith (D-WA), John Lewis (D-GA), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD) today introduced the High Performance Buildings Act, to encourage communities to build sustainable, energy-efficient buildings to lower energy costs and protect the environment.

The bill encourages communities to include sustainable development in their strategic housing plans and to provide grants to non-profit groups to increase sustainable development in low-income neighborhoods. Further, the bill establishes an institute at the National Science Foundation to research indoor environmental quality and its effect on human health and productivity, as well as to encourage the development and deployment of innovative energy-saving technologies.

"In the United States, nearly two-thirds of our electricity and more than a third of our total energy is consumed by buildings. Sustainable technology and architecture in housing can help us fight global warming, lower energy costs and improve family health at the same time," Smith said.

"We are all simply stewards of this little piece of real estate we call planet Earth," said Lewis. "And it is the responsibility of the federal government to encourage citizens to be good stewards with the hope that we can leave this earth a little bit cleaner and a little bit greener for our children and generations yet unborn. Green building is a powerful way to help preserve our natural legacy, and it helps us transform the process of civilization into one that does not injure but sustains the environmental integrity of this nation."

"The United States uses the most energy of any nation in the world, and buildings are the second largest consumer of energy in our country," said Blumenauer. "We know that low income families are particularly vulnerable to rising energy costs. This legislation aims to help by driving down energy costs for families and small businesses, while also serving the environment."

"This legislation will help bring down energy costs and make affordable housing even more energy efficient," Gilchrest said. "It's a great first step that brings together sustainable growth and environmental stewardship. We need to encourage and reward innovative technologies that reduce costs and impacts on the planet."

3/5/2007

Thirteen other Members of Congress lent their support as original cosponsors of the High Performance Buildings Act:

- Lois Capps (D-CA)
- Russ Carnahan (D-MO)
- Norm Dicks (D-WA)
- Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ)
- Alcee Hastings (D-FL)
- Jay Inslee (D-WA)
- Ed Markey (D-MA)
- George Miller (D-CA)
- Frank Pallone (D-NJ)
- C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD)
- Jan Schakowsky (D-IL)
- José Serrano (D-NY)
- Ellen Tauscher (D-CA)

Several organizations endorsed the bill as it was introduced, including:

- American Public Health Association
- Enterprise Community Partners
- Global Green
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- National Center for Healthy Housing
- National Housing Conference

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