



January 22, 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey, Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-218 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
2112 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles B Rangel, Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dave Camp, Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways and Means
1139-E Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Obey, Lewis, Rangel, and Camp:

The Business Council for Sustainable Energy, a coalition of clean energy and energy efficiency businesses and trade associations, commends the House Appropriations Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee for including significant tax and funding provisions for clean energy deployment and for the recycling of waste heat streams, as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Council believes these investments and tax incentives will bolster the American economy and get people back into the workforce, while helping to transform the United States into a 21st century clean energy economy.

Wind, solar, geothermal, hydropower, and other clean energy projects, along with energy efficiency improvements, are proven economic engines that will foster U.S. economic growth and create new high-quality jobs. While in the past these sectors have created millions of well-paying jobs vital to the nation's economic competitiveness and prosperity, they have been adversely affected by the economic crisis, and tight credit markets. With the right policies and investments, however, these industries can offer significant growth potential in the years ahead.

The Council strongly supports passage of an economic recovery bill that includes funding, tax credits, and incentives to deploy existing clean energy sources, including wind, solar, geothermal, hydropower and water energy, natural gas, renewable bio-gas, advanced batteries, biomass, and fuel cells, among others.

The Council especially endorses the broad support in the legislation for investments in energy efficiency, such as funding for the Smart Grid Investment Program, industrial energy efficiency, energy efficiency and conservation in federal and commercial buildings, energy efficiency housing retrofits and weatherization.

We are also pleased that the package includes significant tax incentives for renewable energy deployment. The Council believes that restructuring and extending the renewable energy production tax credit, and the other important renewable energy tax benefits, such as accelerated depreciation, are essential to continued industry growth and the creation of thousands of jobs in the U.S.

While we recognize and support the goals of the legislation, the Council would like to encourage consideration of the following improvements, and refer you to the attached, detailed summary of our clean energy economic recovery recommendations:

Building Efficiency

- The legislation should be amended to include bonus depreciation for energy efficient roof replacements in commercial buildings;

Building Efficiency (continued)

- The legislation should be amended to include \$25 million for building codes inspector training that was authorized under the Energy Policy Act of 2005, and Congress should authorize and appropriate another \$75 million for a total of \$100 million for this training;
- While the Council strongly agrees with the extension of the energy efficiency and conservation tax credits under sections 25(c) and (d) of the Ways and Means Committee bill, to be consistent with the commercial building incentives, the tax credit for new and existing homes should be extended to 2013;

Accelerate, Aggregate and Leverage Clean Energy Investments

- The legislation should be amended to accelerate, aggregate and leverage (with state and local governments) federal and private business procurement of green power, distributed energy (remote, back-up and on-site infrastructure, including advanced metering systems), energy efficiency and renewable energy for buildings;

Tax Parity for Renewable Energy

- The legislation should be amended to provide tax parity for all renewable technologies which currently only receive half-credit.

The Council believes the legislation makes great strides toward moving the nation toward a clean energy economy. The right policies, coupled with the investments in research, development, and deployment of readily available clean energy technologies would help the United States emerge as a global leader in the new green economy and put millions of people to work. The Council strongly encourages Congress to consider adopting these perfecting changes, and to take quick decisive action to enact the economic recovery legislation.

Sincerely,



Lisa Jacobson
Executive Director

Cc: Members of the House Committee on Appropriations
Members of the House Committee on Ways and Means

Attachment

The Business Council for Sustainable Energy

The Council is an industry coalition that includes over 60 businesses and trade associations representing the energy efficiency, renewable energy and natural gas industries. These industries showcase a suite of currently available technology options that can strengthen domestic energy security and also reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to global climate change. For over a decade the Council has represented the views of clean energy technology industries in the development of energy and climate change policy at state, regional, federal and international levels. For additional information about the Council, please visit its website at www.bcse.org