Welch measure provides funding for renewable energy investments in schools

Rep. Peter Welch today voted for and the U.S. House passed a bill that would invest $6.4 billion in school modernization, renovation and repairs in fiscal year 2010. The vote was 275-155.

The bill authorizes $14 million in funding to Vermont schools.

H.R. 2187, the 21st Century Green High-Performing Public Schools Act, would require that the majority of funds be used for projects that meet green building standards.

Welch and several other northeastern lawmakers successfully amended the bill during the last Congress to allow schools to use the funding for renewable energy and heating systems - including biomass, wind, solar and geothermal.

"This investment in public education will support Vermont students, make-much needed improvements in their schools and save taxpayers money by reducing energy costs," Welch said. "Vermont's schools have already taken the lead in converting their heating systems to woodchip and wood pellet burners. This bill will help continue that process and ensure our schools have the resources they need to thrive."

Welch worked with Reps. Carol Shea-Porter, Michael Arcuri and Paul Hodes on the amendment.