

Bill includes billions in long-term tax incentives for renewable energy development

Washington, DC - Rep. Peter Welch today voted to boost investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency in Vermont and nationwide by reversing years of taxpayer handouts to big oil companies.

The House passed the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act, [H.R. 5351](#), ending \$18 billion in subsidies to big oil companies and fully paying for major investments in clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

"It defies common sense that taxpayer dollars continue to line the pockets of oil companies as they reap record profits quarter after quarter after quarter. With oil over \$100 a barrel and our seniors, schools, farms and families already pinched by these high energy costs, it is absurd for the public to continue to subsidize these corporations," said Welch.

The Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act:

- Includes over \$8 billion in long-term tax incentives for electricity produced from renewable resources, including wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, hydropower, ocean tides, and landfill gas;
- Provides families between \$4,000 and \$6,000 in tax credits toward the purchase of fuel-efficient, hybrid vehicles;
- Helps state and local governments finance a variety of environmental conservation and efficiency programs by providing up to \$3.6 billion in interest-free financing;
- Provides tax incentives to help homeowners and businesses reduce their energy costs by investing in energy efficiency measures;
- Contains incentives to expand production of homegrown biomass fuels and includes incentives to increase the number of E-85 pumps for consumers with flexfuel vehicles.

"With this bill, we continue on a path toward energy independence and a pro-growth, pro-jobs greener economy of the future," added Welch.

Gas prices have doubled and home heating costs have tripled for Vermont families since 2001.

Exxon Mobil earlier this month reported the highest profits ever recorded by any U.S. company, with net income rising to \$40.6 billion last year. The company's sales exceeded the gross domestic product of 120 countries, with Exxon Mobile earning more than \$1,287 of profit for every second of 2007.

H.R. 5351 is similar to the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act (H.R. 2776) that passed the House as part of a bipartisan energy package in August 2007.