

Rep. Peter Welch today launched a statewide tour to highlight legislative priorities he will pursue as a member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, the powerful committee with jurisdiction over federal energy, health care, and telecommunication policy. In a divided Washington, Welch will be working in the new Congress to break the gridlock by pursuing practical policies that have the potential for bipartisan support.

At the future site of the Green Mountain Power Innovation Center, Welch highlighted energy efficiency as one of his priorities on the committee. He outlined three legislative initiatives he will pursue.

"Energy efficiency is an issue that can cut through the contentious debate in Washington on energy policy and climate change. We should all be able to agree that using less energy is a good thing. So let's start there in this new Congress and build consensus around energy efficiency which we know will save money, put people to work, and reduce harmful carbon emissions."

Welch's energy efficiency priorities announced Monday include:

Helping homeowners invest in energy efficiency

Welch will introduce legislation to provide a rebate of up to \$8000 to homeowners who retrofit their homes to make them more energy efficient. The rebates will be scaled to provide greater savings for those who save more energy. A similar Welch-authored bill was passed by the House in 2010 with bipartisan support. Welch is working on the legislation with Rep. David McKinley (R-W.V.).

Making commercial buildings more efficient

With buildings consuming more than 40 percent of energy in the U.S., Welch is working with a bipartisan group to advance legislation to increase a tax deduction that encourages commercial

building owners to reduce energy consumption. The bill will make the deduction performance based to reward those who achieve higher energy savings.

Pushing the federal government to become more energy efficient

Welch is working with a bipartisan group of lawmakers to increase the use of Energy Saving Performance Contract (ESPCs), which allow the federal government to partner with the private sector to undertake energy efficiency upgrades that will save energy at no cost to the taxpayer. Contractors are paid from achieved efficiency savings. Last year, at Welch's urging, President Obama announced a \$2 billion commitment to use ESPCs in federal buildings around the world. [Welch recently founded the bipartisan Energy Savings Performance Caucus](#) to promote the use of ESPCs.

Welch's Energy and Commerce tour comes as he reclaims his seat on the Committee, where he previously served in the 111th Congress. He will continue his tour later this week in Montpelier and Chittenden County to highlight health care and telecommunication issues. Media advisories in advance of each event will provide more details.