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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515-6115

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May 5, 2006

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The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-218, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David R. Obey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Lewis and Ranking Member Obey:

In this time of soaring gasoline prices, we urge you to fully fund all programs authorized by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT) to enhance energy efficiency, conservation, renewable energy sources, and clean coal initiatives.

Consumers are still paying the high heating oil and natural gas bills for last winter's heating season. Last month gasoline prices spiked well before the summer driving season. The summer cooling season is now beginning.

On April 6, 2006, Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman responded to a letter from Ranking Member Dingell, requesting details about the "Advanced Energy Initiative" President Bush announced in his State of the Union address in January. Secretary Bodman's response stated that the FY2007 budget proposal "reflects the Administration's priorities *taking into account* spending opportunities presented by EPACT 2005." (emphasis added)

Unfortunately, the priorities reflected in the Administration's budget overlook and underfund EPACT programs that could help consumers. For example, the Administration's FY2007 proposal funds the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) at only \$2.8 billion, rather than the \$5.1 billion EPACT authorized for FY2005-2007, and the request for low-income household weatherization program is \$436 million below the EPACT authorization level.

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
The Honorable David R. Obey
Page 2

Similarly, the President's FY2007 budget request for the highly successful Energy Star program is 3 percent below the FY2006 appropriation for the Department of Energy, and 9 percent below the Environmental Protection Agency's portion of the program.

Finally, whereas EPACT authorized \$200 million for the Clean Coal Power Initiative, the Administration requested only \$5 million.

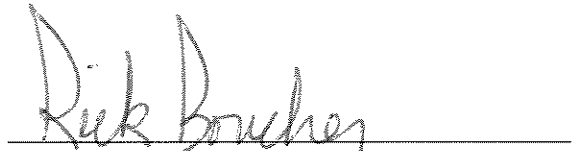
By contrast, the Administration's budget requests \$250 million for a new Global Nuclear Energy Project, which is highly controversial in terms of both its policy objectives and its technical viability.

American consumers are shouldering the burden of high winter heating bills, reeling from high gasoline prices, and facing the possibility of high cooling costs (particularly in States where electricity rate caps are expiring). EPACT is only eight months old, and already the Administration seems to have forgotten many of its more beneficial elements.

Conservation and energy efficiency are among our cheapest alternatives to avert skyrocketing prices, and renewable energy is a promising option. EPACT includes initiatives that can help reduce our dependence on energy imports and dampen price volatility. We urge you to keep the energy needs of consumers foremost in mind and fully fund EPACT and other programs to promote conservation, efficiency, and renewable energy.

Sincerely,

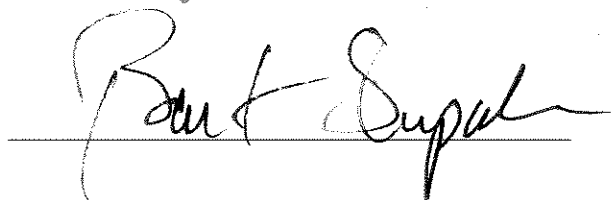


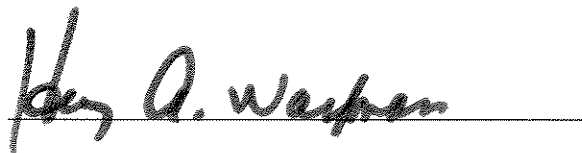


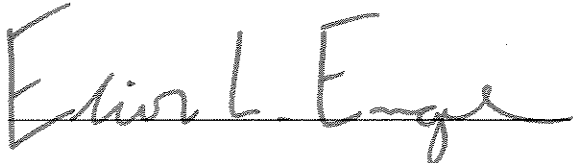












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The Honorable Jerry Lewis
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Page 4

cc: The Honorable Joe Barton, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality