



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
March 1, 2007

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Majority Leader Hoyer Unveils Energy Independence Bill

PROGRESS Act to be Introduced on Monday

WASHINGTON, DC – Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer (MD) gave the following remarks at a press conference today unveiling the PROGRESS Act, where he was joined by several co-sponsors, including some of the House Democrats’ veteran and freshman Members. Below are his remarks as prepared for delivery:

“Thank you for coming. Just seven weeks ago, as part of House Democrats’ 100 Hours Agenda, we passed the CLEAN Energy Act, which would redirect billions of dollars in taxpayer subsidies for oil companies making record profits and toward investments in future energy resources, developing renewable energy, alternative fuels, and conservation and efficiency programs. I said then that the CLEAN Act was a down payment on the promise of a new energy future for our country, and the first step in moving our nation’s energy policy in a new direction.

“Today, I am pleased to be here with some of our Democratic veterans, as well as some of our new Members, to unveil the PROGRESS Act – or Program for Real Energy Security – and to demonstrate our continuing commitment on an issue that is absolutely critical to America’s national, economic and environmental security.

“The PROGRESS Act complements other Democratic efforts on energy, such as Speaker Pelosi’s Innovation Agenda and our Rural Working Group’s biofuels energy package. And in short, it would initiate a robust national program – akin to the Manhattan Project on energy independence.

“First, it would establish a bipartisan National Energy Security Commission, bringing together government, industry and academic leaders to develop consensus national goals on energy – which Congress must act upon under expedited rules.

“Second, it would establish a New Manhattan Center for High Efficiency Vehicles, seeking to double the average vehicle efficiency and to diversify fuel types.

“Third, this bill would establish a National Biofuels Infrastructure Development Program, providing grants to encourage the private sector to invest in wholesale and retail biofuel pumps, tanks and related distribution equipment.

“Fourth, it calls for a stimulus package to upgrade the “pipeline” for biofuels – the freight rail system – while also providing grants to promote conservation alternatives such as public transit and commuter rail.

“And fifth, this bill would increase the use of alternative fuels in federal fleets. The federal government is one of the leading owners of vehicle fleets and consumers of petroleum products, and it must lead by example.

“As some of you may recall, I introduced virtually identical legislation last July after a year of extensive discussions with Members of our Caucus, academics, government officials – including Energy Secretary Sam Bodman – and industry executives. One hundred and twenty-nine Members of Congress signed on as co-sponsors last year, including key committee chairmen such as John Dingell, Jim Oberstar, Ike Skelton and Bart Gordon. This year, we already have 100 co-sponsors and believe there will be even more support for the bill, which we will introduce next week.

“Now, before I recognize my colleagues who are here today, let me close by saying that 30 years ago, during an unprecedented national energy crisis, President Carter said: “With the exception of preventing war, this is the greatest challenge our country will face during our lifetimes.” Because our nation has too often failed to make the hard decisions needed to move toward energy independence, President Carter’s admonition is as relevant today as it was back then. We simply cannot ignore our addiction to foreign sources of oil any longer.

“Yes, we should have acted over the past three decades. But our failure to do so makes it even more essential that we do so now – for our energy security, and to begin to address the reality of global warming.

“In challenge, there is great opportunity. We must seize the initiative – as past generations of Americans have done – and harness the unique American ingenuity that has made us the world leader in innovation, invention and technology. If we do, we can achieve real energy independence that strengthens our national security, boosts our economy, creates more jobs and protects our environment for future generations.

“This legislation – the PROGRESS Act – is another important step in the effort to move America toward energy independence. I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to review this proposal, to give us ideas to improve it, and then to work together for a Program for Real Energy Security.”

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NEWS RELEASE
CONGRESSMAN BOB ETHERIDGE
NORTH CAROLINA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: March 1, 2007

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Congressman Bob Etheridge
Remarks on Introduction of PROGRESS Act
March 1, 2007

I'm Bob Etheridge from North Carolina's Second District and I co-chair the Rural Working Group for the Democratic Leadership.

Rural Americans have been hit particularly hard by rising energy prices, and the time has come to make real progress toward America's energy independence. However, rural communities in particular stand to benefit from this energy crisis if we make a commitment to change the way we get our fuel. The answer to our fuel crisis is growing in our fields.

In my state of North Carolina, soybeans are our largest crop, making up about 25 percent of the total acreage of the state. They have hundreds of uses, including soybean diesel, which is competitive with the cost of traditional petroleum-based diesel.

I have been pleased to work with Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and my other Democratic Colleagues to craft this innovative legislative proposal. The PROGRESS Act recognizes that energy independence will only be achieved with a substantial investment in biofuels.

The PROGRESS Act will establish a National Biofuels Infrastructure Development initiative to develop the infrastructure to make biofuels available on a mass scale. This grant initiative would reimburse private-sector partners to share the costs of investing in wholesale and retail biofuel pumps, tank and related distribution equipment. The initiative would also include matching grants from state and local governments designed to encourage the spread of alternative fuels.

By investing in biofuels, we are not only making energy more affordable, we're also investing in rural America. Every dollar we invest in domestic biofuel production is a dollar that stays in America and creates good-paying jobs in our communities. It's a win-win solution for America.

You know, many times throughout our history, rural America has taken the lead role in progress through innovation. Innovators like George Washington Carver promoted new uses for crops like peanuts and sweet potatoes and led a revitalization of southern agriculture. Biofuels present the opportunity for a new revitalization of rural America in answer to our energy crisis.

I congratulate Majority Leader Hoyer for his leadership and my Democratic colleagues for their creativity in crafting this legislation. We have the ability to become energy independent in America, and the PROGRESS Act will provide the leadership to achieve that vision.

NEWS FROM Congressman Steve Israel



News Release 110-027
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March 1, 2007

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News Release

Majority Leader Hoyer, Rep. Israel, House Democrats Announce the *PROGRESS* Energy Security Legislation *Israel: PROGRESS Act is an Important National Security Measure*

Washington, DC—Congressman Steve Israel (D-NY) made the following remarks today at a press conference with Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and other House Democrats announcing the PROGRESS Act:

I spent four years on the House Armed Services Committee; I now serve on the Energy and Water Subcommittee of Appropriations. I'm a pro-defense Democrat who believes in a strong and robust military. And the PROGRESS ACT is an important national security measure.

Almost every military challenge we face is derived from our dependence on foreign oil. I visited China last month on an energy security congressional delegation. While we were there, the Chinese government announced that it was expanding its navy to protect its energy supplies. Iran is on the road to developing nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, it sits on the second largest recoverable of oil in the Persian Gulf and controls 25% of world crude oil that travels through the Straits of Hormuz.

How do we protect against emerging threats? With a strong military. Last year the Department of Defense spent \$10.6 billion dollars on basic energy costs. Of that the Air Force spent \$4.7 billion dollars on one thing: buying fuel for its planes. The Stryker Combat Vehicles that transport our troops in Iraq get about seven miles to the gallon. The C-17s that transport mission critical equipment burn 3,000 gallons of fuel an hour.

So we are borrowing money from China to fund our defense budgets to buy oil from the Persian Gulf to fuel our weapons to protect us from China and the Persian Gulf. It's not an absurdity. It's a fundamental vulnerability.

Our dependence on foreign oil is as glaring a threat to our national security as Sputnik, the Cold War and the Space Race were. We confronted and beat these threats through research and development and a national commitment. And we'll do the same by passing the PROGRESS Act. It uses the same techniques that we used to land man on the moon by fostering collaboration between government, the private sector and academia by creating the National Energy Security Commission. It harnesses the DOD's potential to be a leader in advanced energy by authorizing the DOD to enter into long term contracts to purchase biofuels and other unconventional fuel sources. It also requires that the Secretary of Defense report to Congress on the Department's use of flex fuel vehicles and alternative fuels.

Yesterday, the Energy and Water Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, on which I sit, had a hearing on the outlook for advanced energy technologies. If we continue on the present path, the outlook is bleak. In the past thirty years, federal investments in renewable energies plummeted 85% (in real terms) -- from \$5.5 billion in 1978 to \$793 million in 2005. The result? In 1973, renewable energy was 6% of the US energy portfolio. In 2004 it was still 6%. Meanwhile, total US energy consumption will grow by 30% by 2030.

It's time to end the missteps, back-steps and half-steps that have characterized U.S. energy policy. As a matter of our own national security, it's time for a giant leap forward. That is exactly what the PROGRESS ACT achieves.

In July 2006, Israel, along with his colleague Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD), formed the Defense Energy Working Group. The working group, founded on the premise that the military's dependence on energy is a national security vulnerability, is a bipartisan study group of House members that identifies challenges associated with this dependence and recommends logistical and policy solutions. Israel is also founder and co-chair of the Democratic Study Group on National Security, and chairs the Democratic Caucus Task Force on Defense and the Military.

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**CONGRESSMAN EMANUEL CLEAVER, II STATEMENT ON THE
RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE PROGRESS ACT**

March 1, 2007

“I would like to thank my good friend and Majority Leader, Steny Hoyer for inviting me to stand with him as he re-introduces the PROGRESS Act. One of America’s founding words is ‘Independence.’ As colonists we declared it, as citizens we celebrate it — ‘Independence’ is in our blood, it is part of who we are as a nation.

The word ‘Independence’ means different things to different people. To the disabled it means being a part of the community, to seniors it means living life to its fullest, to children it means finding their own path and back home in my District, Independence, prior to and after the ascension of its favorite son, Harry Truman, meant ‘unbeholden’.

Today, however, we are here to talk about a different kind of independence — energy independence. While a relatively new, but overdue, conversation, I believe the issue of energy independence goes to the heart of our nation’s founding beliefs. Our Founding Fathers sought to throw off the chains of a foreign power, so our nation could discover its own destiny. Yet, here we stand 230 years later again beholden to foreign nations whose influence threatens our future.

We are the world’s only superpower, but when it comes to oil, we are a colony of the Middle East. Here, today, it is time we once again declare our independence from those who manipulate our decisions by controlling the oil that has become our lifeblood.

It will take boldness, innovation and sacrifice to break this cycle of dependence. The PROGRESS Act commits our nation to harnessing American ingenuity by creating a public-private Manhattan Project to research and develop high-efficiency vehicles and alternative fuels. America’s researchers have put a man on the moon and mapped the human genome. With this bill, we can and will now lead the world in the next generation of vehicles.

To further the goal of energy independence, I am proud the PROGRESS Act includes provisions of my Congress Leads by Example Alt-Fuels Resources Act or CLEAR Act. Leader Hoyer’s bill will begin the process of moving the government and particularly Members of Congress toward using alternative fuel vehicles.

Americans would much rather see a sermon than hear one. Surely, Congress cannot sell the public on the need to abandon its gas-guzzlers when they observe Members of Congress proudly driving them.

With the PROGRESS Act, we look forward to one day celebrating a 21st Century Independence Day — a day when America sustains its own citizens’ energy needs and steps forward as a steward of the global environment.”

Emanuel Cleaver, II is the U.S. Representative for Missouri’s Fifth Congressional District, which includes Kansas City, Independence, Lee’s Summit, Raytown, Grandview, Sugar Creek, Belton, Raymore and Peculiar, Missouri. He is a member of the exclusive House Financial Services Committee, a Regional Whip of the Democratic Caucus, and Second Vice-Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3013

News From U.S. Congressman Albio Sires
1024 Longworth, Washington D.C. 20515

For Immediate Release
February 16, 2007

Contact: Olga Alvarez
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I first want to thank Majority Leader Hoyer for his leadership in this important area. And I appreciate the opportunity to talk today about our country's addiction to oil.

The PROGRESS Act does many good things, as my colleagues have discussed. But I would like to focus on the role of our partners in this effort. As a former Mayor and Assembly Speaker in New Jersey, I appreciate that this Act involves our regional, State, and local partners. It recognizes that the only way we can solve the problem of oil addiction is by working together.

Let me highlight a few points. The National Biofuels Infrastructure Development Program established by this Act reimburses our private sector partners who invest in biofuel equipment. And the National Energy Security Commission brings together government, industry, and academic leaders to develop national goals and recommendations that respect regional energy solutions.

New Jersey, my home State, recognizes the importance of working together. The State is a member of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative designed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants. Additionally, the State utilized research in crafting its Energy Master Plan which reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2020.

New Jersey has shown to be a leader in this area. We need to follow their lead and work together by passing the PROGRESS Act to reduce our dependence on oil. Thank you.

News

FROM THE OFFICE OF
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2007

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STATEMENT ON ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Press Conference on the PROGRESS Act

I want to thank our Majority Leader Mr. Hoyer, for offering a practical and workable plan to move our country into a new direction -- from energy dependence to energy independence.

President Theodore Roosevelt once stated, "I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use our natural resources, but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob by wasteful use, the generations that come after us."

Yet, decades later, we are wasting and robbing our precious resources. Without a doubt, our behavior and lifestyles are adversely impacting the earth's climate; the consequences are real but avoidable. Congress must act because it is not just our obligation, it is our moral responsibility. Global warming is not doomsday rhetoric. And as a global leader, we in the U.S. must take decisive action.

For a variety of reasons, including economic opportunities, my District has seen a surge in population growth. This increase, however, has resulted in some of the worst traffic congestion in the nation. Indeed, Atlanta metropolitan drivers spent an average of 67 hours per year delayed in traffic.

It is time for this insanity to stop.

That is why I stand here today in support of the "PROGRESS Act. This broad legislation will expand public transit; increase the use of alternative fuels, and spur greater domestic production of fuel-efficient vehicles. This bill will promote the development of a rail infrastructure program which would greatly benefit the citizens in my District and others by helping to alleviate the traffic gridlock.

Real investment in public transportation is needed to fight congestion and to move us closer to a cleaner environment. We have a duty to develop and use our natural resources. But our

addiction to fossil fuels must end.

This Congress is moving forward with real solutions to cut our dependence on oil. This will benefit public health and save taxpayer dollars. That is why we must enact a forward-looking energy policy and Mr. Hoyer's legislation fits the bill.

My constituents in Georgia are tired of being held hostage to the greed of big oil interests. Citizens were confused and horrified when gas prices soared – almost overnight, to over \$3 a gallon. Working families in the 4th District were outraged when they learned that gas prices were soaring and oil companies were enjoying record-breaking profits. And they were angered even more to ultimately learn that this Administration contributed \$7 billion to big oil's boom time.

It is time for the Federal Government to set the standard for renewable energy. Reducing our reliance upon foreign oil and the continued use of fossil fuels is not only environmentally responsible and our moral duty but is vital to our national security. Our well-being and the security of future generations depend upon it.

Back home in Georgia, we have farmers and businesses ready and willing to buy into alternative energy and we have workers ready and willing to fill the jobs created by this new industry. We need to promote biofuel plants across the nation and urge small businesses to get on board and make it happen.

We can conserve, yes. But we can also change our reliance – shift our allegiance from those who would gouge us, to those who will work with us.

Years ago President Jimmy Carter nudged us in the direction of renewable energy. I was pleased to see his continuing and unwavering support as he broke ground in Plains last month for a 30-million-gallon biodiesel plant which will blend oil from canola, cotton, soybeans and sunflower seeds.

That's the vision we see for America – one that's good for the economy, protects our environment, expands opportunities for the nation's workforce and is fair to American consumers.

Thank you.

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CONGRESSMAN JERRY MCNERNEY CALIFORNIA'S 11TH DISTRICT

Remarks as prepared for delivery
March 1, 2007

Contact:
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I am here today as a strong supporter of the PROGRESS Act.

Before arriving in Congress, I spent more than 20 years of my professional career researching the benefits of and developing renewable energy sources. I can say definitively that we haven't yet begun to realize the benefits that new energy technology development can offer to this country in:

- Job creation – an entire spectrum of good-paying jobs here in our country – some estimate 800,000 in the next few years, especially in places like San Joaquin County in my district.
- National security – by moving towards ending our nation's dependence on foreign oil from Middle East countries.
- Environmental security – by tackling global warming and other critical issues facing our country.
- Economic security – producing energy in this country and with American ingenuity means a stronger economy, more jobs, healthier communities, and affordable power.

One aspect of the PROGRESS Act that I am particularly excited about is the focus on encouraging important research and development. R&D – harnessing and encouraging American creativity and resourcefulness – will lead us to new sources of clean energy.

And creating better incentives for engineers and scientist to develop this type of innovative energy technology will make renewable energy more affordable and accessible.

The United States must be a leader in supporting sustainable energy. Doing so will mean good jobs in the United States. It will also mean an increasingly diversified economy developing energy efficient and environmentally friendly technologies, producing products and ideas for the rest of the world.

I support the provisions and goals of the PROGRESS Act. I urge all of my colleagues – on both sides of the aisle – to do the same.