

(December 18, 2007) Lipinski Hails "Best Day for the Environment and American Energy Independence"

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Landmark Energy Bill Clears Congress and Illinois Awarded FutureGen Clean Energy Project

[WASHINGTON, DC] Today, Representative Dan Lipinski helped pass the Energy Independence and Security Act, a sweeping energy plan that will revolutionize our nation's energy economy, help free us from our dependence on foreign oil, create millions of new jobs, and reduce the threat of climate change.

"Today is the best day for the environment and American energy independence in a generation, as America takes a big step forward in combating global climate change and breaking the grip that 'Big Oil' companies and OPEC have on our nation," said Lipinski. "I am pleased to have played a key role in getting this historic bill passed and in authoring important provisions of the legislation."

"Our work today is a victory for the pocketbooks of middle-class Americans, the security of our country, and the health of the environment," stated Lipinski. "But this bill is not perfect. I am disappointed that the other body was unable to retain the language I fought for to make oil and gas companies pay their fair share. I will continue the fight against 'Big Oil' and work to break the death grip that it has on American consumers."

Rep. Lipinski, Vice Chairman of the House Committee on Science and Technology, authored two key provisions included in the legislation: the H-Prize Act and the BRIGHT Energy Savings Act. These provisions will help advance the goals of cutting America's foreign oil dependence and reducing global warming through the development of new clean energy sources and a reduction in energy consumption; in addition, tens of millions of taxpayer dollars will be saved by reducing the energy consumption of the federal government.

- BRIGHT Energy Savings Act: Requires the federal government - the nation's largest energy consumer - to use high efficiency light bulbs in 1,800 civilian office buildings; this change will significantly reduce energy consumption - about 75% savings for each of more than 3 million bulbs - saving tens of millions of taxpayer dollars; and

- H-Prize Act: Establish over \$50 million in cash prizes for the "H-Prize" program to spur innovation in hydrogen energy technologies and advance the use of hydrogen as a pollution-free transportation fuel that will replace gasoline.

The comprehensive legislation will increase Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards to 35 mpg for cars and trucks by 2020, up from the current level of 27.5 mpg for cars and 22.2 mpg for light trucks. These provisions will save American families an estimated \$700 to \$1000 per year at the pump, while significantly reducing oil consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The bill also includes a robust increase in the production of renewable motor fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel, and mandates the production of more energy-efficient home appliances such as washing machines, dishwashers, and refrigerators.

Tomorrow, the President is expected to sign the groundbreaking legislation into law.

Also today, Rep. Lipinski praised the selection of Mattoon, Illinois, as the site for the \$1.5 billion coal-fueled FutureGen power plant. This ground-breaking facility will generate electricity using cutting-edge technologies, placing the United States at the forefront of new energy development with near-zero emissions. Further, the plant will utilize new methods of capturing and permanently storing carbon dioxide underground, reducing the release of dangerous climate changing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

"I am thrilled by the selection of Illinois as the host site for FutureGen," stated Lipinski. "The establishment of this revolutionary facility is an important and necessary step for our country in developing new, emissions-free energy resources for our future. Illinois will greatly benefit from this facility through the creation of nearly 1,500 jobs and the use of one million tons of Illinois coal, and I am proud to have worked hard to bring this project to the state."

Illinois' selection represents the culmination of efforts by the FutureGen for Illinois Task Force, of which Rep. Lipinski is a member, to attract the facility to the state. FutureGen will serve as both an effective source of power as well as an innovative research laboratory for the development of emissions-reducing technologies. As a power source, FutureGen will employ coal gasification technology to supply 150,000 homes with electricity, while also producing significant amounts of clean hydrogen for use in fuel cell technology. As a research facility, FutureGen will work to develop and refine clean coal technology, hydrogen production, and carbon sequestration. The application of these advanced technologies will advance the development of new energy resources, while bringing the best scientists and engineers to the state of Illinois.

[Click here for Congressman Lipinski's floor statement on passage of H.R. 6.](#)