



**Opening Statement of Chairman Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.)
Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming
“Stimulus Package and Energy: Creating Jobs, Opportunities for All”
Thursday, January 15, 2009**

I welcome back the members of the Select Committee for our first hearing of 2009. I am extremely proud of the work this committee accomplished during the last Congress, and want to thank Ranking Member Sensenbrenner and all the members of the Committee for their contributions. Together we stand on the front lines of the fight to rescue our economy, re-power our energy sector and protect our planet.

The beginning of a New Year often prompts resolutions to improve the next 12 months, and this year is no different. Though some New Year’s resolutions have a habit of “going in one year and out the other,” Congress cannot weaken its resolve to address three of the most important issues before the nation: restoring the economy, increasing energy independence and fighting climate change.

Over the past year, the U.S. economy suffered through a market meltdown, a foreclosure crisis, and a volatile oil market. In 2008 2.6 million U.S. jobs were lost, the Southeast suffered a serious drought while the Midwest saw tragic flooding, and a coal ash catastrophe in Tennessee spread hazardous waste 50 times greater in volume than the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

We must prevent a similar summary for 2009. The Obama administration has outlined an economic stimulus plan to revive the economy through tax incentives and millions of jobs in renewable energy, infrastructure improvements, increased state and local aid, and improving the energy efficiency of buildings. These initiatives offer an unprecedented opportunity for green-collar jobs and a clean energy revolution to be the backbone of a stronger economy.

Green jobs are already helping the economy. Just yesterday, it was reported that sustainable building material company Serious Materials is trying to buy a traditional window factory that went bankrupt last December. The company wants to rehire 300 workers who were laid off and train them to build more efficient windows. Congress and the administration must support these efforts on a national scale. The stimulus greenbacks should yield green results for all.

A package focused on more efficient and renewable energy can result in greater labor intensity and higher wages than investing in oil production. This is not robbing Peter to pay Paul. An analysis by the University of Massachusetts-Amherst predicts a net increase in jobs if Congress supports expanding the renewable energy and energy efficiency industries.

The stimulus plan should reflect short-term and long-term benefits. Direct infusion to states and localities can kick-start economic and energy development. Energy efficiency and weatherization can be deployed immediately through existing skill sets and technology. Tax incentives and smart grid development can sustain a national network of long-term, permanent employees.

A green economy didn’t get us into this mess—but it can get us out. The promise of a green economy can be met nationally, from hi-tech hubs to factory towns and wind farms on ranches. In this New Year, Congress must resolve to find a green economic tide that lifts all boats.



**THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND GLOBAL WARMING**