



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

Opening Statement of Chairman Edward J. Markey

**"Climate for Innovation: Technology and Intellectual Property in Global
Climate Solutions"**

Wednesday July 29, 2009

Today the Select Committee will hold a hearing to focus on an issue that underlies all of our discussions on technology but which is often overlooked: intellectual property rights and the role they play in developing and deploying clean technology solutions. The gentleman from Wisconsin is a leading Congressional authority on intellectual property rights, and during our recent trip to China he constantly reminded our Chinese hosts that technology must solve the problems of energy security and climate change, but to do so effectively we need a rigorous system to protect intellectual property. I share that view and we're having this hearing to explore those issues.

There is a huge and growing demand for climate related technologies. It can and should be met by inventions of American companies. America is well equipped to lead and provide the cutting edge technologies we so urgently need for solving the climate and energy challenges. We need to develop the solutions for tomorrow, and deploy them worldwide.

Passage of the Waxman-Markey American Clean Energy and Security Act will push entrepreneurs and college kids, Silicon Valley stars and Stanford roommates, to work hard and try their luck at inventing new ways to produce renewable energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

When those entrepreneurs succeed, what will happen to their product and know how? That is the question we will explore today.

In the upcoming Copenhagen negotiations, technology cooperation will be an important topic as countries look for ways to enhance deployment of climate technology around the world.

At the international level, there is consensus that clean technologies have to be developed and deployed, and that the current efforts in this respect have to be enhanced. There also is general agreement that the private and public sector will have to find new and better ways to bring these solutions to the villages in India and the towns in South Africa. But though countries might agree on the general direction, there are very different views on the ways to achieve the goals. With only 130 days left until the Copenhagen negotiations, the world faces great challenges to find an agreement on how to address the technology challenge.

Today is a good time to take a close look at business opportunities, at technology cooperation, at barriers to spreading solutions and at the closely related question of the protection of intellectual property rights.

Intellectual property rights enable innovators to be rewarded for their creativity and investment of time and money. But these rights must balance the need for incentives with the common good, the interest of sharing ideas and technology. This is why in the U.S. we have time limits on patents and copyrights. This is why the United States and all members of the World Trade Organization agreed on a treaty which outlines how intellectual property rights should be protected on a global basis.

We have the international framework in place, though I appreciate that there are disagreements as to how well that framework operates in daily practice. Nonetheless, I think it is important to see if we can develop policies within this framework that can trigger the innovation and deployment we want. With American ingenuity we became world leaders in communications and information technology. Let's again embrace the opportunities for our country, and businesses to lead the world into a low carbon future.

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