

Energy for the 21st Century

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Recognizing supply concerns, high energy costs, and our dependence on foreign oil, Rep. Castle believes we have a responsibility to preserve and protect our environment. He supports improving automobile efficiency, investing in research and development of efficiency and renewable energy, and exercising greater conservation to help meet our energy needs.

- Corporate Automotive Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) standards - Congress and the President agreed to increase fuel efficiency standards for cars, SUVs, and some trucks for the first time in statute since 1975. Rep. Castle supported the law, which raised the standard to 35 miles per gallon by 2020, and believes that making our vehicles go farther on a tank of gas will contribute greatly to reducing emissions from transportation fuels that contribute to global warming.

- Biofuels - Rep. Castle voted to require that 36 billion gallons of biofuels be blended with conventional fuels by 2022. Recognizing the need to exercise caution, that the increased production not adversely affect the food supply, he strongly supported the new law requiring increased use of materials other than corn, such as sweet sorghum, rice straw, and switchgrass in producing biofuels.

- Energy-Efficiency Standards for Appliance and Buildings - Rep. Castle supported the new law requiring better energy-efficiency standards for appliances and buildings. Improving the efficiency of how energy is used by appliances and buildings is one of the fastest ways to immediately. Energy Star appliances, for example, are a great tool for consumers who wish to improve the efficiency of household appliances and lower their electricity bills.

- Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) - Rep. Castle believes in requiring utilities to gradually increase the portion of electricity produced from renewable resources such as wind, biomass, geothermal, and solar energy. Specifically, he supports legislation to require electric utilities to produce 20% of their power from renewable energy sources by 2020, and he voted for an amendment to require 15% by 2020 during consideration of an energy bill in the House in August 2007. A federal RES has passed the House and Senate at various points but has yet to be included in the new energy laws.

- Tax Incentives for Renewable Energy / Energy Efficiency Investment - Rep. Castle has voted in favor of three similar bills to extend tax credits to producers of renewable energy and for energy efficiency tax credits. The debate continues over whether to shift the current tax credits from oil and gas producers to renewable energy and energy efficiency, however he believes this is a reasonable approach to jump start needed technology advancements.

- Wind in Delaware - Wind energy is reliable, clean, will not contribute to climate changes, and is cited as the fastest growing commercial energy source in the world. All wind energy facilities in the United States are based on land, and it's exciting to think that Delaware could be the first to pursue offshore wind energy development. Rep. Castle supports a long-term extension of the Production Tax Credit (PTC), which expires at the end of 2008, which will help with continued investment in renewable energy sources around the country, like the offshore wind energy project in Delaware. He has also encouraged the Minerals Management Service to act quickly in setting the regulations for offshore alternative energy development.

