

Castle Urges Speaker to Take Comprehensive, Bipartisan Approach to Climate Change -- June 8, 2007

Washington D.C.

-- Representative Mike Castle joined leading Republicans on climate change yesterday in sending a letter to Speaker Pelosi cautioning against moving forward with ad hoc energy proposals that could undermine the greater goals of meaningful action on climate change, which the Speaker has stated will be on the agenda this fall. With several energy proposals moving through various House committees, concerns have been raised that Congress is missing the mark in crafting meaningful climate change policy, which is inextricably linked to energy policy.

"Just this week a proposal to set new strict regulations for siting wind turbines was part of an energy package debated in the House Natural Resources Committee; this is clearly an issue that could impact Delaware's development of offshore wind resources. While the contentious provision has since been removed, it highlights the need for a more coordinated effort between energy policy decisions and the greater climate change picture. The energy policy decisions we make now will impact our ability to reduce the global warming pollution that is such a worldwide threat," said Castle.

"With rising fuel prices, growing concern for the United States' dependence on foreign oil, and a push for a viable and alternative domestic energy source, the development of renewable energy resources is critical. Delaware's proposal is on track to be the first of its kind in the United States. We have hit the critical timeframe for mitigating the impact of climate change, and the decision to support offshore wind development will position Delaware well for reducing its overall greenhouse gas emissions. I have long supported the use of conservation measures, increased efficiency, and renewables for meeting our energy needs, and I will continue to push for an approach that does not hinder our ability to address climate change."

Text of the letter is as follows:

Dear Madame Speaker:

In March of this year, you committed the 110th Congress to pass legislation which would both meaningfully address climate change and reduce the dependence of the United States on foreign sources of energy. We strongly support these goals and are supportive of comprehensive, cohesive policy proposals that would achieve them.

We note that preliminary proposals are currently being released from House committees in anticipation of floor consideration of an Energy Independence Day legislative package. We are writing you to express our concern that the achievement of legislation addressing climate change is inextricably linked to energy independence and could well be undermined by any major energy policy decisions made this summer, without considering the climate change implications. A comprehensive approach to energy and climate change policies should include the consideration of conservation, energy efficiency, traditional energy sources and the development of alternative and renewable sources at the same time we consider environmental impacts.

We urge you to lead the Congressional discussion of national energy policy this year toward a coordinated and comprehensive legislative package that achieves these goals, and avoid an ad hoc approach that could potentially complicate efforts to meaningfully address climate change. We would be happy to discuss this further with you.

Signers of the letter are Representatives Mike Castle (DE-00), Wayne Gilchrest (MD-01), Christopher Shays (CT-04), and James Walsh (NY-25).

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