

## Chairman Dingell at the Full Committee Markup on Energy Legislation

Statement of Congressman John D. Dingell, Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

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This is the first and not the last word on subjects we will be wrestling with for some time.

Today we will consider a series of energy bills that will accomplish much good. The efficiency provisions alone will remove more than 8.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, an amount equal to the annual emissions of all of the cars on the road in America today.

I recognize that the bills we are working on today may have displeased some of our more ideologically inclined colleagues on the left and the right, who might want us to be more prescriptive on the regulatory side, or more permissive on the production side. We are proceeding on legislation where there is a consensus. We have left issues such as motor vehicle fuel economy, coal-to-liquids, and a renewable portfolio standard out of the base text. Members may wish to offer amendments on those subjects, and that is their right. But I would caution the Committee that this may only complicate the task of moving legislation through the House and through a conference with the Senate, so that a bill can be presented to the President for signature.

These issues will be addressed in the fall in the context of comprehensive climate change legislation.

We should set ambitious goals and targets for that legislation. It should stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations at levels that will avoid or avert large-scale climate change consequences. That will require a reduction in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions of between 60, and perhaps as much as 80, percent by 2050.

How to get there will be the hard part.

We need to put everything into the discussion, whether it is politically salable or not. Yes, that means a mandatory cap and trade system, and some form of carbon emission fees.

We will have to figure out ways to deploy wind, solar, wave, geothermal, and other forms of energy production on a scale never before attempted.

Weâ€™ll have to examine the future of coal and the role of nuclear power.

We will need to get beyond the stale debate over miles per gallon. We should be talking about the lifetime carbon footprint of vehicles, about the carbon content of fuels, about the promotion of renewable fuels and advanced batteries

and other technologies.

We will need to discuss the role of carbon sinks and sequestration, as well as land use policies.

We will need to sort out the various responsibilities of the local, state and federal governments, this country's international obligations, and what we can do to enlist other countries in these efforts.

Perhaps our most difficult and important task will be to ask what we can do to change attitudes toward energy use, and our personal behavior in using and conserving energy.

We should leave as few of these issues to bureaucratic discretion as possible. It is the job of the Congress, and of this Committee, to make tough calls "as we did in writing the Clean Air Act Amendments in 1990. This will allow us to distribute the burdens fairly" and there will be burdens. But let's accept that, and also accept our own responsibility: to create a secure future for our country and our world, one that preserves economic opportunity and our natural environment.

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