

June 14, 2001

INTRODUCTION OF THE RENEWABLE ENERGY ACT FOR CREDIT ON TAXES

HON. SUSAN DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2001

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would invite you to join me as a co-sponsor of the Renewable Energy Act for Credit on Taxes.

This is a refundable tax credit to be given for investments in renewable energy systems based on solar, wind, or fuel cells providing up to \$4.50 per Watt of electricity produced, capped at the lesser of 35 percent of the cost of the system or \$6,000 for residences and \$50,000 for commercial enterprises. It would sunset in four years.

A recent ABC poll showed that 90 percent of the public support increased investment in renewable energy sources. In its National Energy Policy, the administration has also identified this need.

Based on the California experience, we need to supply more energy at peak periods as soon as possible. Because of transmission gridlock both between states in the western region and within California, right now we need to increase supplies where they will be used. Public policy calls for increasing reliance on renewable energy sources.

Therefore, we need to give incentives to power sources that can be put into operation relatively quickly, produce power at peak times where it will be used, and be powered by renewable energy sources.

The administration's National Energy Policy states, "Photovoltaic solar distributed energy is a particularly valuable energy generation source during times of peak use of power." [p. 6-10]

Under-used locations for increased production of power are homes and businesses. Owners have not invested in personal energy systems in part because they have not provided a reasonable return on the investment. This gap can be bridged by using tax incentives to motivate additional private investment in power. The benefit is a long-term contribution to power supply that does not require continued cost for fuel.

Solar power for water heating has been used extensively in the West over many years because it has been a good investment. It demonstrates the willingness of owners to make this investment when it is financially viable.

Newer materials and more reliable systems have become available to make individual photovoltaic systems attractive as well. In April a solar demonstration home was built on the Washington Mall that not only incorporated many energy saving designs but also employed a solar energy system with back-up batteries. The additional cost for the solar system for this large, three-bedroom, two story home was given as \$30,000.

Is a federal tax credit enough to encourage a homeowner to make this investment? Under my bill the owner would qualify for \$18,000 of the cost based on the amount of power produced; however, the proposed cap would be

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the lesser of 35 percent of the cost or \$6,000, leaving \$24,000 of uncovered cost.

While this might not be a sufficient incentive for many owners, some 14 states as well as about 26 municipalities have additional rebates. California, for example, has a rebate program capped at 50 percent of the cost. In this case, the California homeowner combining the two programs would be paying only \$9,000 of that cost.

Without a rebate, a homeowner could buy a system of half the capacity receiving a lower rebate but still have a \$9,750 net cost under this bill.

The advantage of a solar solution is that in many locations the solar energy is most available when it is most needed—in the summer in the middle of the day.

In other areas wind systems are viable with applications that look like a typical roof top vent suitable for residences and businesses. While there is a current production tax credit for wind energy, it is not an attractive financial incentive for individuals since the owner is using the product not selling it. Thus, a tax credit is the appropriate mechanism.

I have chosen a refundable tax credit rather than a grant program as less bureaucratic and readily accessible to a taxpayer. The sunset will give incentives to immediately increase supplies.

I believe it is time to take a large stride toward investing in renewable energy that will continue to produce power for many years without needing to purchase fossil fuels. We can have more clean power where we need it at peak periods.

CONGRATULATING ELMER BECKENDORF

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2001

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend and outstanding Texan, Mr. Elmer Beckendorf. This Saturday, June 16, 2001, Elmer a member of the North Harris Montgomery Community College District Board of Trustees will receive the Association of Community College Trustee's Regional Trustee Leadership Award. His commitment to public service and above all his dedication and support for education earned him this rightly deserved honor.

Born December 14, 1921 in Harris County, Texas, Elmer is a fifth generation resident of Harris County, Texas. He graduated from Addicks High School and attended the University of Houston. During World War II, Elmer served in United States Army Signal Corp attached to the Air Force installing and maintaining radio equipment providing communications for an Air Force Fighter Wing in the Pacific area of operations, Okinawa and surrounding areas. After the war, he returned to Texas where he married Dorothy Heldberg. They have three children, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren. In 1954 Mr. Beckendorf formed E.L. Beckendorf and Sons, Inc., an independent dairy farm.

Elmer Beckendorf has been a true leader in his community, having served on public

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boards for 47 years. He has served on the North Harris Montgomery Community College District (NHMCCD) Board of Trustees for sixteen years including two two-year terms as chair and two two-year terms as vice chair. During his service, the college district has grown from two campuses serving four school districts to four, soon to be five, comprehensive campuses and six educational centers serving nine school districts in a 1400 square mile area with a population of over 1 million citizens.

He was elected to and has served on the Tomball Independent School District Board of Trustees for 22 years, holding various offices including president during

Civic organizations on which he has served include the Tomball Regional Hospital Authority Board of Directors, member since 1975, chairman since 1982; the Cypress Creek Branch of Greater Houston YMCA, board member 1975-1986 receiving the Volunteer of the Year in 1979; the Rotary Club of Tomball, member 1955 to present; the Greater Tomball Chamber of Commerce member since 1975 receiving the Citizen of Year in 1979; the Texas Forage and Grassland Council, Charter member, 1979 to present and President from 1981-1984; the Houston Milk Producers Federal Credit Union as an Officer of the board for 29 years; the Association of Community College Trustees as a Lifetime member; the Dairy Shrine Club as a Lifetime member and the Tomball Future Farmers of America as an Honorary Chapter Farmer.

Additionally, Elmer Beckendorf has been a champion of education supporting and leading initiatives in the area of economic development, workforce development and K-16 partnerships. With his support, NHMCCD has established Center for Business and Economic Development (CBED), a center focused on economic development initiatives and workforce development needs of our region. His support for K-16 partnerships, initiatives and agreements has led to the seamless flow of curriculum, program and services from public school through community colleges and universities.

The Association of Community College Trustees could not have picked a more outstanding person for this award. Elmer Beckendorf is a very special person and one who exemplifies the true public citizen willing to give tirelessly of himself in order that others may benefit. On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives and the citizens of the 8th Congressional District of Texas, I offer our warmest congratulations.

A NEW DIRECTION AT ST. LOUIS HOUSING AUTHORITY

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2001

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to share some very happy news about the St. Louis Housing Authority. Just two short years ago, the St. Louis Housing Authority had the distinction of holding the worst federal ranking—14.25 out of 100—of

any big city housing authority and the Department of Housing and Urban Development was threatening to take over the agency. But then, fortunately, Cheryl Lovell was named Executive Director of the agency and good things began to happen. Last month, the St. Louis Housing Authority achieved a federal ranking of 70.3 and by all accounts things are improving for the residents of St. Louis public housing.

I commend Cheryl Lovell for her dedication and achievement and would like to share the following article "City Housing Raises Its Grades" which appeared in the St. Louis Post Dispatch on June 13, 2001.

[From the St. Charles County Post, June 14, 2001]

AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS WILL BE STUDIED

(By Ralph Dummit)

A consultant has been selected to conduct a study in St. Charles County on the availability of affordable housing. The consultant is Paul Dribin, who served for several years as an official in the St. Louis office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Dribin Consulting was picked by St. Charles County Executive Joe Ortwerth from among five or six applicants for the \$45,000 contract.

Social service workers across the county have sought answers to the question of available housing for low-income residents for many years. They have contended that not only is it difficult for poor families to rent houses but that affordable houses for sale to the poor are in limited supply. They are concerned that development is geared more to large houses on large lots than to building houses or apartments in a more modest price range.

Dribin is no stranger to housing matters in St. Charles County. The Farms apartment complex off Kisker Road had been a property insured and subsidized by HUD when neighbors began to complain about its poorly maintained and rundown condition.

As a HUD official in St. Louis at that time, Dribin sought to solve the problem at The Farms. He was able to acquire \$8 million from HUD to repair the project and got a voluntary deed from the owners in lieu of foreclosure, then conveyed the property to St. Charles County. Today, the property—now called Sterling Heights—is well maintained and provides affordable housing to dozens of families.

In previewing his job for the county, Dribin wrote that the problems of affordable housing are increasing in rapidly growing areas such as St. Charles County. Most residents are benefiting from the expanding economy, but "the working poor are finding housing options more limited."

Dribin may rely on Development Strategies Inc., to gather census data for his study. The county had hired Development Strategies after the Flood of 1993 to study ways to provide replacement housing for the hundreds of people left homeless by the flood.

Dribin said that after the census figures are analyzed, he will prepare a comprehensive report "detailing the housing conditions and the overall need for affordable housing" in the county.

Further, based on the identified needs of the community, Dribin will present to the County Council "a detailed proposal outlining alternative strategies for implementing an affordable housing policy."

The consultant added, "Forming a housing authority is only one option in a range of public and private sector alternatives to address (the county's) housing needs."

Dribin expects to have an initial report completed by mid-August and to issue a completed report by the end of September.

Recently, business leaders have joined in voicing concern about providing more affordable housing for their employees.

Gregory D. Prestemon, president of the county's Economic Development Center, said late last year that he had heard from almost all of the county's larger employers "that they see a need for housing to fit the needs of people of all income levels."

Ortwerth has told the County Council that although state law authorizes a county housing authority—such as the one in the city of St. Charles—to construct, acquire, lease or operate housing complexes, that is not his goal.

Ortwerth said a county housing authority should concentrate on working with the private sector to promote the construction of affordable housing. He contends that such housing can be built so that it will maintain its value and does not depreciate the value of other residential properties in a community.

One purpose of studying the county's housing needs is to qualify under state statutes to form a county housing authority. Earlier, Ortwerth had hoped such an authority might be able to take over the voucher program administered by the North East Community Action Corp., also known as NECAC.

In a related move, Ortwerth last year filed suit seeking a declaratory judgment on whether NECAC or the county should be eligible to administer Section 8 housing assistance to low-income individuals and families.

No judgment on the suit has been rendered. Meantime, NECAC traditionally has administered the Section 8 program in the county—at least 575 vouchers at present—excluding the city of St. Charles. The vouchers are the equivalent of holding cash as low-income people search for suitable and affordable housing in the county. But even among the holders of the vouchers, many give up when they are unable to find places to rent.

TRIBUTE TO SARA FORDE AND ANGELA RETEGUIZ

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2001

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize two of New York's outstanding young students, Sara Forde and Angela Retegui, on the occasion of their Gold Award Ceremony. On July 19, 2001, the women of Service Unit 35 will recognize Sara and Angela.

Since the beginning of this century, the Girls Scouts of America have provided thousands of youngsters each year the opportunity to make friends, explore new ideas, and develop leadership skills while learning self-reliance and teamwork.

These awards are presented only to those who possess the qualities that make our nation great: commitment to excellence, hard work, and genuine love of community service. The Gold Awards represent the highest awards attainable by junior and high school Girl Scouts.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the recipients of these awards, as their

activities are indeed worthy of praise. Their leadership benefits our community and they serve as role models for their peers.

Also, we must not forget the unsung heroes, who continue to devote a large part of their lives to make all this possible. Therefore, I salute the families, scout leaders, and countless others who have given generously of their time and energy in support of scouting.

It is with great pride that I recognize the achievements of Sara and Angela, and bring the attention of congress to these successful young women on their day of recognition.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

SPEECH OF

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY, former Congressman from the ninth Congressional district of Massachusetts.

JOE MOAKLEY was first sworn in as a representative in 1989. We know him most recently for his long service on the Committee on Rules—he was chairman of that committee from 1989 to 1994, and continued to serve as the ranking member from 1995 until this year.

As my colleagues have noted before me, JOE MOAKLEY never forgot his roots. Even as Chairman of one of the most influential committees in the U.S. Congress, he always had time for constituents in need, and junior Members of Congress who didn't understand the intricacies of House operations. He was known for his ability to diffuse tense situations with a humorous comment, and was welcomed and appreciated by all for his direct yet respectful manner. As my colleagues from the other side of the aisle have noted, we all thought of him as a fair chairman and an honest human being.

I began my elected service in the House of Representatives in 1989, and it was in that year that six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter were murdered in El Salvador. Congressman MOAKLEY was appointed as the head of a special task force directed to investigate the murders and the response of the Salvadoran government. It was this task force which first reported the connection between these murders and several high-ranking military officers in El Salvador. This report was of sufficient gravity that it resulted in the termination of U.S. military aid to El Salvador. The end of the civil war in that country is often attributed to his work in this area and the change in U.S. policy which resulted therefrom. JOE MOAKLEY did not have to take on any of this extra work. It didn't help him get elected, he didn't get paid any more money—he did it, I believe, because he felt a need to right a wrong, and this is how I will always remember him.

We here in Washington are all missing him very much right now. I know his surviving family and other relatives will miss him even