

Rep. Peter Welch hailed the work of Efficiency Vermont, the innovative statewide energy efficiency utility, at a House Subcommittee on Energy and Environment hearing on energy efficiency Tuesday morning.

Welch, a member of the subcommittee, outlined Vermont's successes in saving money and reducing the state's carbon footprint by taking the lead on efficiency. He exhorted the committee to incorporate these Vermont successes in its forthcoming climate change legislation.

Click the headline to read Rep. Welch's remarks as prepared for delivery. [Click here to see a video of Rep. Welch speaking to the subcommittee.](#)

"Global warming is real, it is an urgent threat, and it requires our immediate action. We cannot - we simply cannot - solve this crisis without a focus on increasing our energy efficiency. As a nation that consumes more than one quarter of the world's energy, we simply cannot afford to do anything else.

"Vermont's leadership provides an example for the nation and for the world. What we have found in our state is that efficiency is an effective and affordable means of reducing our carbon impact. Efficiency Vermont is the nation's first statewide provider of energy efficiency services. What this pioneering efficiency utility has demonstrated is truly remarkable.

"First, efficiency works. Thanks to Vermont's commitment to investing in efficiency and the effectiveness of Efficiency Vermont, our statewide energy requirements were reduced by 1.74 percent in 2007. That reduction exceeded the projected rate of load growth, making us the first state to ever turn 'load-growth negative.' People said this couldn't be done, but Vermont did it. Through efficiency investments made since 2000, Vermont is now using 7 percent less energy than it would have otherwise.

"Second, efficiency is cost effective. The cost of efficiency in 2007 was 2.6 cents per kWh -- compared to the 10.7 cents per kWh cost for comparable electric supply. That investment simply makes sense. And, Vermonters save money. Electricity savings in 2007 were 105,000 mWh, an 88 percent increase over 2006. In a tough economy when so many are struggling to

get by, this is energy Vermonters simply didn't have to take out of their paycheck.

"Third, efficiency is the path to reducing our carbon emissions. In 2007, Efficiency Vermont's efforts resulted in 661,500 fewer tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, 562 fewer tons of nitrogen oxides and 1,103 fewer tons of sulphur dioxides entered the atmosphere.

"The goal of this committee must be to reduce greenhouse gasses by 80 percent by 2050. Many models suggest energy efficiency should provide 30 percent of that reduction. To meet that target, we will need to cut energy use by about 3 percent per year. Efficiency Vermont in 2007 achieved a nearly 2 percent reduction. We know it is possible to do more. We must make this a priority and a reality nationwide.

"We can and we must begin to build the onramp toward a global warming solution. That onramp, simply put, is through efficiency."