

Washington, D.C. - Speaker Nancy Pelosi praised Congressman Peter Welch's leadership in making his offices in Washington and Vermont carbon neutral. The Speaker lauded Welch's initiative following her acceptance of a preliminary report by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the House aimed at reducing the environmental impacts associated with the operations of the House building complex.

The preliminary report on the "Green the Capitol" Initiative was presented by the CAO in response to a March 1 letter by House Democratic leaders requesting the development of such an initiative.

Upon receiving the report, Pelosi and House leaders announced their intention to operate the House in a carbon neutral manner.

"The environmental challenges we face are as local as our neighborhoods and as global as our planet," Speaker Pelosi said. "The House must lead by example and Congressman Welch exemplifies this key model. He has brought Vermont's values to Washington and his leadership on global warming is a valuable asset to the U.S. Congress and to our country."

Welch said: "Speaker Pelosi has demonstrated the strong commitment to addressing global warming that we need from our nation's leaders. The time is now to act. While the challenges of global warming must be addressed through comprehensive legislation, we also have the opportunity to take practical, immediate actions as a first step and to serve as a vital example. I hope my office's carbon neutral initiative will be one of many catalysts for needed change."

In February, Welch launched an initiative to make his congressional offices in Vermont and Washington carbon neutral by working to reduce energy use and through offsetting his office's carbon emissions. By providing financial support for Vermont renewable energy projects, Welch offset the greenhouse gas emissions related to his office activities so they will not contribute to global warming.

The preliminary report on the 'Green the Capitol' initiative accepted by Speaker Pelosi recommends operating the entire House complex in a carbon neutral manner, shifting to 100 percent renewable electric power sources, aggressively improving energy efficiency, and implementing offsets to ensure carbon neutrality, among other strong steps. The full report and executive summary of the preliminary report by the House CAO is available at <http://www.speaker.gov/>