By The Associated Press

Congressman Peter Welch is getting an up-close look at energy efficiency issues.

Welch took part in an energy efficiency audit Tuesday at a West Rutland home whose basement and attic were examined for leaks.

The audit is part of a program being implemented by NeighborWorks of Western Vermont, which won a $4.5 million grant last year. Sen. Bernie Sanders sponsored the law that authorized the program, which allows NeighborWorks to conduct 2,000 or more comprehensive energy audits.

Welch is the author of the Home Star Energy Retrofit Act, which passed the House last year but wasn't taken up in the U.S. Senate. It would help families retrofit, renovate and insulate their homes, creating, he says, up to 170,000 jobs.