



Climate Solutions: Summary of Work

March - August 2007

Select Committee  
on  
Energy Independence  
and Global Warming.  
U.S. House of Representatives

**Congressman Edward J. Markey, Chairman**

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# Climate Solutions.

Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming

*New Direction Congress Leads to Results*

## **Intro**

On January 18, 2007, as one of her first initiatives as the new Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rep. Nancy Pelosi announced that she was establishing a new committee in Congress – the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. With this key announcement, she made clear to the House that this was the end of “business-as-usual.” She directed this new non-legislative committee to take charge of two of the most pressing issues of our time – restoring our freedom from over-reliance on foreign oil and reinforcing the need to reverse the planet’s dangerous levels of global warming pollution.

Soon thereafter, she appointed nine Democrats to the 15-person bipartisan Select Committee, and asked environmental and energy leader Rep. Ed Markey to chair this special panel. After more than a decade of inaction by a Republican controlled Congress, Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the Select Committee are now leading the New Direction Congress towards a brighter environmental and energy future--a future based on solid science, renewable and efficient technologies, and sustainable communities where families can breathe clean air, drink clean water and obtain quality jobs in a growing economy.





### *Passing a Landmark Clean Energy Bill*

In early August, 2007 the New Direction House passed landmark energy reform legislation, speeding Congress well on its way to realizing Speaker Pelosi's and the Select Committee's vision. The energy bill sets a national standard for the production of clean renewable electricity, creates millions of new green jobs, and reduces America's dependence on foreign oil. The bill is just the first step in the larger effort to reduce America's dependence on oil and limit the heat-trapping emissions that cause global warming. This fall, the House will consider setting binding limits on the emissions of carbon dioxide and other global warming pollutants, so that for the first time the United States will move in the direction that the Bush Administration spurned with its rejection of the international climate treaty. The European Union has moved ahead in the absence of initiative by the U.S. government. Speaker Pelosi and the Select Committee are determined to see that the U.S. House of Representatives passes legislation bringing the United States into a partnership with Europe to halt global warming, thereby creating the conditions necessary to seek the cooperation of China, India and other developing countries.

Since the formal authorization of the Select Committee in March of this year, Chairman Markey has moved swiftly to carry out its mandate. Working with a majority of nine Democrats to six Republicans, the Select Committee has held nearly a dozen high-profile hearings bringing together experts, world leaders and concerned American citizens. In addition, just prior to the G-8 Summit of world leaders in Berlin, Speaker Pelosi and Chairman Markey led members of the committee to the ice cap of Greenland and to Europe to meet with heads-of-state to emphasize the need to tackle global warming head-on. The Select Committee is working with the world's top scientists and environmental experts to highlight solutions and to conduct oversight investigations to keep the pressure on an administration that has refused to move with any urgency on global warming or energy issues. The Select Committee will continue to shape public debate and champion goals that benefit our environment and the economy.



# Taking Action.

Here is a brief summary of the impact that the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming has had in its first six months as it presses for effective energy and climate solutions:

## *Holding the Bush Administration Responsible on Greenhouse Gases*

### **Action:**

The Select Committee held the first public hearing on the implications of the Supreme Court case of Massachusetts vs. EPA, challenging the attempts of EPA Administrator Johnson to prevent the states from acting to limit global warming pollution from the tailpipes of automobiles under the Clean Air Act. To emphasize this point, Chairman Markey invited the Attorneys General of California and Massachusetts to testify at the hearing to make clear that draft legislation pre-empting the states and repealing the effect of the Supreme Court decision was completely unacceptable.

### **Impact:**

The pre-emption legislation was pulled one week later.

## *Defending U.S. Energy Security*

### **Action:**

The Select Committee held the first Congressional hearing on the national security implications of global warming as seen from a panel of top retired generals and admirals. The former Army Chief of Staff, General Gordon Sullivan, gave powerful testimony linking global warming to violence such as we have seen in drought-torn regions such Somalia, where the fight for control over famine aid ended with the incident known as Black Hawk Down.

### **Impact:**

Following the hearing, Chairman Markey introduced legislation, H.R. 1961, the Global Climate Change Oversight Act, with several members on and off the Select Committee, and worked successfully to ensure that a National Intelligence Estimate on global warming was added to the Defense and Intelligence authorization bills passed by the House.



## *Plugging Into Energy Independence*

### **Action:**

In order to highlight the next-generation technology available to help reduce our oil dependence and global warming pollution, the Select Committee held a hearing to examine the potential of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), which are capable of getting up to 150 miles per gallon. Chairman Markey and Mr. Rob Lowe, actor and advocate, conducted a hands-on demonstration of two plug-in hybrid vehicles on the Capitol grounds.

### **Impact:**

Chairman Markey, Reps. Blumenauer, Inslee, Cleaver, and Hall introduced the Plug-in Hybrid Opportunity Act of 2007 to provide tax incentives for consumers to convert their existing hybrids into plug-in hybrid vehicles. In addition, Blumenauer and Markey successfully added tax reform on the House energy bill that shifts up to \$1.5 billion in subsidies from heavy, inefficient SUVs to hybrid and renewable technologies.



## *Fostering a Green Economy*

### **Action:**

The Select Committee held the first Congressional hearing on "green jobs," jobs rooted in the renewable energy systems nationwide. These homegrown jobs have the potential to employ millions of Americans through increased investment in renewable solutions.

### **Impact:**

Rep. Hilda Solis, a member of the Select Committee, introduced legislation to train a new generation of green workers. Her legislation became the first title in the energy bill which passed the House in August.



## *Listening to the Warnings of Climate Scientists*

### **Action:**

The Select Committee invited a panel of the nation's top climate scientists to appear at a hearing featuring Dr. James Hansen of NASA, who the Bush Administration has unsuccessfully tried to both silence and ignore for many years. Dr. Hansen's climate modeling is relied on throughout the world and its accuracy has been confirmed by a myriad of field observations. He was joined by eminent experts warning of species extinction, increasingly severe weather events, forest fires and starvation from drought if we do not prevent a rapid rise in global temperatures.

### **Impact:**

Hansen's testimony that day became the basis for his latest scientific paper examining the question "How Can We Avert Dangerous Climate Change?"

## *Global Warming Mountaintop "Summit"*

### **Action:**

The Select Committee held its first field hearing on top of Cannon Mountain in New Hampshire, exploring regional impacts of global warming on New England, including the ski industry, maple syrup industry, and tourism.

### **Impact:**

Activists in New England picked up on the theme by sponsoring a series of mountain climbs in New England's Presidential Range to draw attention to the problems discussed in the Congressional "Summit on the Summit" hearing.

## *Working Together with World Leaders*

### **Action:**

The Select Committee held a joint briefing with the Committee on Foreign Affairs with the Prime Minister of Sweden, and also exchanged views with Chancellor Merkel of Germany, President Barroso of the EU, and numerous environmental ministers.

### **Impact:**

Foreign Affairs Chairman Lantos and Select Committee Chair Markey introduced H.R. 2420, the International Climate Cooperation Re-engagement Act, which was incorporated into the House-passed energy package. This bill requires America to re-engage in international climate negotiations and promote renewable energy exports.

## *Helping Cities and Towns*

### **Action:**

In recognition of the collective demand of over 600 mayors calling for action on global warming, the Select Committee held a hearing with the Mayors of Chicago, Gainesville, and Portland, the hometown of Select Committee member Rep. Earl Blumenauer. The mayors testified about innovative steps they were taking in the absence of federal action, such as conserving green space and urban forests, reducing greenhouse gasses one per-

cent below 1990 levels, increasing density, promoting public transportation powered by alternative fuels, and developing resources for the public to learn more about reducing their carbon footprint at home.

**Impact:**

In response to the initiative of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Congress authorized funding in the energy bill for a global warming grant program so that cities can properly plan for and help prevent global warming.

### *The Economic Risk of Rising Global Temperatures*

**Action:**

The Select Committee was the first House committee to hold a hearing to publicize the important analysis by the Government Accountability Office showing how severe weather events associated with climate change could easily overwhelm existing national flood and crop insurance programs. Hurricanes more powerful than Katrina and coastal erosion of villages such as Alaska's Shishmaref promise to boost economic losses from extreme weather substantially above the \$800 billion already experienced since 1980.

**Impact:**

This hearing demonstrated that the economics of ignoring global warming can be dramatically costly. Estimates provided in the most comprehensive economic analysis of global warming to date (a report prepared by Sir Nicholas Stern for the UK government), show that for every dollar spent on mitigating carbon emissions to prevent dangerous overheating of the planet, nearly \$5 of damage can be avoided.



### *Getting Offsets on the Right Foot*

**Action:**

The Select Committee held the first hearing in Congress regarding the integrity of the voluntary carbon offset market. Environmentally-aware individuals and businesses buy carbon offsets in order to stimulate actions that reduce emissions, but the voluntary market is unregulated. The purpose of the hearing was to ensure that consumers get what they pay for.

**Impact:**

Following the hearing, Chairman Markey immediately contacted the Federal Trade Commission regarding ensuring the integrity of carbon offsets from the perspective of consumers, asking that the FTC adopt standards that will ensure that consumers get what they pay for. The chair of the FTC responded that the agency would hold a series of workshops to accomplish this goal. Chairman Markey has also written to the EPA asking it to convene a process that will lead to voluntary widely-shared protocols that ensure that carbon reductions promised are carbon reductions delivered.

## *Protecting Consumers from Gas Price Hikes*

### **Action:**

Focusing on the devastating impact of high gasoline prices on small businesses, the Select Committee held a hearing to call attention to soaring gas prices. The witnesses included diverse business people such as a school bus fleet owner, an air conditioner salesman and a farmer, who all decried the national failure to free the United States from the OPEC oil cartel.

### **Impact:**

The hearing added support for legislation in the Small Business Committee to provide small business owners with help in becoming more energy efficient and develop new renewable energy technologies, and in the Energy and Commerce Committee to outlaw price gouging.







# Greenland/EU 2007.

Pelosi & Select Committee Meet With Scientists and World Leaders

## *Bi-Partisan Search for Answers*

Prior to the G-8 Summit in Heiligendamm, Germany, Speaker Pelosi and Chairman Markey led a bi-partisan delegation of members of the Select Committee to Greenland and Europe to gain first-hand knowledge of the impacts and solutions to global warming in Greenland and Europe. In Greenland, they met with top climate scientists on the Jakobshavn Glacier - Dr. Konrad Steffen, Dr. Jay Zwally, and Dr. Jose Rial - who all provided compelling evidence of the accelerating melting of the ice cap. They also heard from the Premier of Greenland and local citizens who described dramatic changes in climate over the last 5 years.

They next traveled to Berlin to meet with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany on the eve of the G8 summit, where global warming became a topline issue.

In London, the delegation met with Sir Nicholas Stern regarding the economic benefits of taking action now against global warming, and other officials like David Miliband, Secretary of State for the Environment, and John Ashton, the Foreign Office Special Representative on Climate Change.



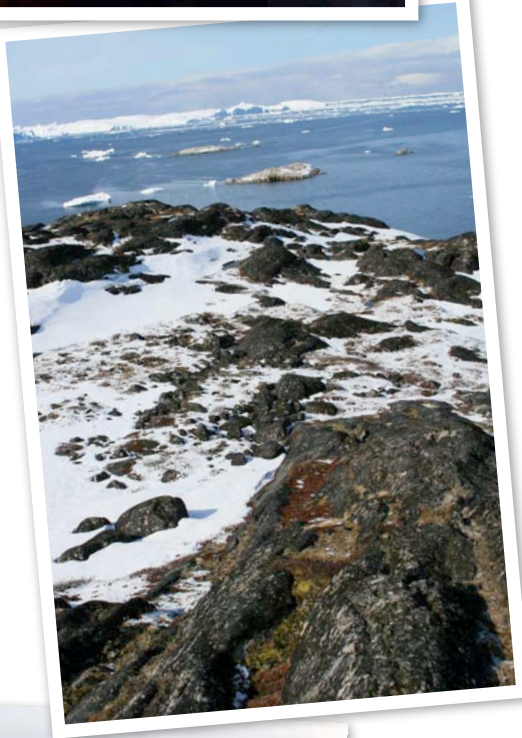
## *Greenland/EU 2007*



The last stop was Brussels, where the delegation met with European Union President Jose Manuel Barroso, E.U. Commissioner for Energy Andris Piebalgs, and Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt of Belgium.

### **Impact:**

After the highly-publicized meeting between the delegation and Chancellor Merkel on the eve of the G8 meeting, President Bush announced that he would finally begin "discussions" about how to limit carbon dioxide emissions.



In addition, Britain's Environmental Minister, David Miliband traveled to the United States the following week, and at the request of the delegation, met with moderate Republicans regarding global warming. The E.U. impressed upon the delegation that it was moving from voluntary to mandatory fuel economy standards (44 mpg equivalent by 2012) and that it was opposed to liquefying coal for use in transportation because of its adverse impacts on climate.



*Working with World Leaders  
on Global Solutions.*

# Members of the Select Committee.

## DEMOCRATS

Congressman Ed Markey of Massachusetts, Chairman  
Congressman Earl Blumenauer of Oregon  
Congressman Jay Inslee of Washington  
Congressman John Larson of Connecticut  
Congresswoman Hilda Solis of California  
Congresswoman Stephanie Herseth Sandlin of South Dakota  
Congressman Emanuel Cleaver of Missouri  
Congressman John Hall of New York  
Congressman Jerry McNerney of California

## REPUBLICANS

Congressman James Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin, Ranking Member  
Congressman John Shadegg of Arizona  
Congressman Greg Walden of Oregon  
Congresswoman Candice Miller of Michigan  
Congressman John Sullivan of Oklahoma  
Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee

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