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Contacts: Israel Klein (JEC)

202-224-5171 or

Rodell Mollineau (Reid)

202-224-2939

SENATE DEMS SHOW THAT ENERGY EFFICIENT U.S. FAMILIES SPEND \$1,600 LESS ON UTILITIES AND GASOLINE, BOLSTER CASE FOR SENATE ENERGY BILL

Joint Economic Committee Report Shows Improving Efficiency Could Save the Average Family an Estimated \$750 a Year in Household Energy Costs and \$875 a Year on Gasoline Costs

Increased Efficiency Would Also Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and U.S. Dependence on Foreign Sources of Energy

Washington, DC: Today, the Senate Democratic leadership team released a report highlighting the energy savings potential for American families that embrace energy efficiency. **Senators Harry Reid (NV), Chuck Schumer (NY), Dick Durbin (IL), and Patty Murray (WA) of the Senate leadership will be joined by Senators Bob Casey (PA) and Amy Klobuchar (MN).** The Joint Economic Committee (JEC) report entitled, "*Energy Efficiency Is a Bright Idea*," shows that families that take advantage of energy efficient practices, appliances and vehicles could save an estimated \$1,600 each year in energy costs, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and our nation's dependence on foreign sources of energy. As the energy bill is debated on the Senate floor, Schumer, who chairs the JEC, initiated the report to shed light on the benefits of increasing energy and fuel efficiency to American families and the environment.

Reid stated, "This report shows clearly the benefits of energy efficiency for all Americans, including savings every year in household energy and gasoline costs. Democrats are moving forward with energy legislation that will lower energy costs, strengthen our national security by reducing our dependence on oil and protect our environment by reducing global-warming emissions. Unfortunately, while Democrats fight for national and economic security, this Administration continues to be more interested in giving tax breaks to oil and gas companies even as prices have doubled and oil company profits have soared."

Schumer said, "You don't have to be Thomas Edison to know that better energy efficiency is a win-win-win for American families. Families will save up to \$1,600 on their annual

- *Home Appliances* account for about 30 percent of total household energy use, which currently amounts to approximately \$550 per year. A refrigerator bought in the 1970s uses 75% more energy than those on the market today; families could save about \$100 a year on electricity by switching to an ENERGY STAR refrigerator and washing machine.
- *Lighting* currently accounts for about 5 to 10 percent of total energy use in the average American household, or \$50 to \$150 in electricity costs per year. Replacing just five 60-watt incandescent light bulbs with 13-watt ENERGY STAR compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) can save households about \$30 a year in lighting expenses, assuming the lights are in use for four hours a day.

Gasoline Costs Reduced with Fuel-Efficient Vehicles:

Transportation is the single largest sector of consumer spending on energy, representing \$475 billion in total spending in 2005 and represents 68 percent of our nation's oil usage.

A household that operates vehicles with an average fuel efficiency of 35 miles per gallon (mpg) can expect to spend 27 percent less on fuel than a household that operates vehicles with an average fuel efficiency of the U.S. fleet average of 25.4 mpg. Using the Department of Energy's gas price forecast, the average family with two vehicles driving each 14,600 miles per year a family will spend around \$3,200 this year on gasoline if they drive vehicles with the fleet average of 25.4 mpg. But a family that drives just as much, but with more efficient 35 mpg vehicles, would spend approximately \$880 less on gasoline.

The Joint Economic Committee, established under the Employment Act of 1946, was created by Congress to review economic conditions and to analyze the effectiveness of economic policy.

For the full report, please go to www.jec.senate.gov.

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