

An energy efficiency jobs program based on legislation written by Rep. Peter Welch will be included in a forthcoming Senate jobs bill, Welch announced Tuesday.

Known as Home Star, or Cash for Caulkers, the program is based on legislation Welch authored to create jobs by providing incentives for energy efficiency improvements in residential buildings. By providing efficiency rebates to homeowners, Home Star would help families realize significant energy savings after investing in home retrofits.

“Investing in energy efficiency does exactly what the American people are telling Congress to do: it creates jobs and helps middle class families save money,” Welch said. “A national efficiency retrofit program will provide just the kick local economies throughout Vermont and throughout the country need. I’m pleased that Senate leadership has joined President Obama and homeowners throughout the country in supporting this effort.”

Home Star is based on the Retrofit for Energy and Environmental Performance (REEP) program, which Welch introduced in the House last March. REEP, which provides incentives for home and commercial energy efficiency retrofits, was subsequently incorporated into the American Clean Energy and Security Act (H.R. 2454), which passed the House this summer.

Welch has been working with White House officials and congressional leadership for months to include a modified version of REEP in job creation legislation. The effort received a major boost in December when President Obama embraced the initiative as one of three job creation priorities. Obama invited Welch to take part in an event at a Home Depot in Alexandria, Va., during which the President cited Welch’s efforts to promote energy efficiency.