

Congresswoman Betty McCollum

Serving Minnesota's 4th Congressional District

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Congresswoman McCollum's Remarks at the Save Energy Now LEADERS Conference

Thank you, Jean, for the introduction, and I also want to thank John Woodsworth of 3M for his leadership in making 3M a showcase for how energy efficiency is good for business. I am proud to have companies like 3M headquartered here in the 4th Congressional District.

When I was a young girl living in South St. Paul, my mother used to take us to see the 3M Christmas tree. Even though we had a perfectly good one at home. But it was always a treat to come visit here.

We're here today to talk about energy efficiency. It may not photograph as well as a solar panel or wind turbine, but you all in this room know energy efficiency is just as critical for building our clean energy future.

In the U.S. industrial sector alone, energy efficiency measures have the potential to reduce the growth of U.S. energy demand by more than 20% in the next decade.

Smart business leaders know that energy efficiency is about the bottom line. Money saved on energy costs means more money that can be invested in hiring new workers, and investing in research and development. In today's global economy, energy efficiency isn't just a competitive advantage, it's a competitive necessity.

The Save Energy Now program offers a model public-private partnership to ensure we can and will meet that potential.

3M was the first company in the country to become a Save Energy Now LEADER. They voluntarily accepted DOE's challenge reduce energy consumption by 25 percent within the next 10 years. 3M is well on its way towards meeting that goal.

In 6 years, 3M's global operations has reduced energy use per unit of production by 39 percent. That has reduced their greenhouse gas emissions by an eye opening 69 percent.

So there is a lot the private sector can take from 3M. 3M deserves credit for its leadership and result, as do many of the other private sector leaders here today.

Credit must also go to the Department of Energy, who took the initiative to establish the LEADERS program.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I'm committed to supporting this model program that allows federal dollars to leverage private sector investment. The hardworking folks in the Industrial Technologies Program at DOE have done an incredible job to identify energy efficiency opportunities for the private sector and provide the expert technical assistance to make sure companies can take advantage of the latest innovations.

Thank you Issac Chan and Sandy Glatt for your strong leadership at the department and to all your great staff here from DOE and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

The Save Energy Now LEADERS program is just one of many exciting things taking place at DOE today.

TIME magazine recently ran an article on "How Obama's Stimulus is Changing America." They called the Recovery Act "the most ambitious energy legislation in history" that has "convert[ed] the Energy Department into the world's largest venture-capital fund."

Roughly \$90 billion is now being invested into building a Smart Grid to update our outmoded transmission system, weatherizing homes, harnessing renewable power from the Earth, and the ARPA-E program, the Advanced Research Projects Agency, to finance cutting edge energy research modeled after DARPA, the agency that brought us the Internet.

As you all are well aware, there is right now a global race to build the clean energy economy for the 21st century.

Americans often take for granted that we'll win this race. But Ernst and Young recently named China the most attractive place to invest in renewable energy, knocking the United States out of the top position. That is unacceptable to me.

This is a wake up call to get America moving on this. This should be our generation's "Sputnik" moment.

When I was a child, the threat of the Soviets putting a man on the moon before us woke us up. Our federal leaders set a goal to do it in partnership with the private sector and university researchers. It was a monumental effort that resulted in victory and success for the United States.

The innovation unleashed by the space race produced technologies that created whole new industries and millions of new jobs.

Today's race is perhaps even more important. We can only win this new race for new markets and new technology if the federal government is fully invested in building this clean energy future for tomorrow. Efforts like the Save Energy NOW program, must be a partner with the private sector in creating the foundation to make this possible.

It's not the government's job to grow our economy, but it is our job to make the necessary investments to create the foundation for private sector success. I believe the future of our economy depends on it. We cannot afford to fall behind further.

It will take all of you in this room, and this administration and us in Congress, to put all our brains and resources and dedication to do win this race. But I know we can.

Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.

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