



**Press Conference Remarks**  
**Senator Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.)**  
**Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**  
**Democratic Energy Bill the American Energy Innovation Act of 2015**  
**September 22, 2015**

“Thank you all for coming today. I greatly appreciate it. I want to thank my colleagues for being here as well. Particularly, our leadership team of Senator Reid, Sen. Durbin and Sen. Schumer. Clearly, this is a bill that has worked with three different committees: the EPW (Environment and Public Works) Committee with Senator Boxer and team, the Finance Committee with Sen. Wyden and the energy team. I want to thank all the staffs, from those three committees, for all of their hard work on this bill, especially the Energy Committee and our staff director Angela Becker-Dippmann, Sam Fowler, our chief counsel, and everybody on that team.

“This legislation represents ideas from 25 different members. Some of them are here today: Sen. Stabenow with her great advanced manufacturing and truck agenda, Sen. Franken, Sen. Heinrich, Sen. Shaheen, Sen. Markey, Sen. Whitehouse and many others. If we have a chance, depending on when the votes start, we are going to have each of them speak for a minute.

“But I want to thank Sen. Wyden, because it’s very important that we do bring our 21st century energy ideas to the table, and nothing says that more directly than what we do with the tax code. Over this next week, we are going to have some pretty interesting visits, obviously the Pope coming here and, in a few hours, the president of China will land at Paine Field in Washington. We’ll be discussing many of these ideas, as they relate to clean energy.

“America needs to lead on this issue and that’s what we’re trying to do today, as Democrats – to say, ‘this is the agenda that will move our country forward on a clean energy agenda.’ It is a technology-driven pathway to a clean energy future and by tackling energy efficiency in sectors ranging from trucks to buildings to our electric grid, we target the most important opportunities for reducing carbon, creating jobs and helping consumers have more and better choices. It is an actionable path that we think can get implemented.

“We are making important investments in science and clean energy technology so that the U.S. can lead in clean energy. We estimate that this bill could support and create 3.5 million jobs. So our approach is to set concrete targets to innovate our way to achieving that. And

anyone who says we can't achieve those is betting against American ingenuity, which has built our economy again and again.

“We recognize that there are huge opportunities for exporting this U.S. technology. For instance, the global smart grid market is expected to surpass \$400 billion worldwide within the next 5 years. Unsurprisingly, China will be the largest smart grid market in the world with 24 percent of the global market. And China is also predicted to account for half of the new construction globally in the next decade. According to the International Energy Agency, the energy efficiency market in China alone is expected to total more than \$1.5 trillion between now and 2035. So we think this represents a huge economic opportunity to reduce carbon, and to build greener, smarter buildings and an electric grid that will enable more carbon reduction. China needs to have clean energy solutions and we need to seize the economic opportunity to sell them.

“Our Democratic energy bill promotes game-changing R&D and smart buildings which will help integrate buildings into the electricity grid in a more efficient way. And obviously, people don't realize that they are the largest user, with 40 percent of energy consumption in our buildings. So that's why we are targeting these in the bill.

“But we are also giving first-time incentives to homeowners to claim tax-credits based on achieving their own retro-fitting. For example, \$1,750 tax break for a 20% reduction in your energy use. Or if you're going to go all-out and get a net-zero home, as much as a \$6,500 tax break. Newly-constructed homes that are at 25 percent more efficient will receive a \$1,500 credit. So we're doing the same thing with smart buildings, and making sure we're investing in those tax credits.

“But the key thing we are driving is an energy efficiency resource standard. And I want to thank my colleague Sen. Franken for championing this proposal. It is and will be one of the key sources of energy savings in our bill. It would require utilities to achieve a 1 percent energy savings in 2017 and ramp up to 20 percent by 2030. These technologies can help us grow our market for energy efficiency. The cost of saving an electron is one-third the cost of producing an electron. And that is the key principle behind our bill.

“This bill empowers consumers and businesses providing the choice, and we heard from Sen. Reid about why this is so important. Even the Green Tea Party is getting active on this issue. Why? Because some people are artificially charging higher rates for connection fees than they should be. That's why this legislation is proposes that the Department of Energy provide good housekeeping standards for consumers and transparency in their home energy bills. So you'll see your entire energy bill and know what the cost of generation is, and be able to make your own smart choices. We also want the Federal Trade Commission to make sure that consumers aren't gouged on connection fees. Our bill also makes sure that producers of heavy-duty trucks, which, if you think about our nation and how much freight we have, is going to matter to us. Heavy-duty trucks are 70 percent of U.S. freight and they use 20 percent of the fuel consumed in the United States. The same efficiency that we've been able to drive into automobiles, we want to drive into trucks. And the bill makes incredible savings.

“This bill, when fully implemented, reduces greenhouse emissions by 34 percent by 2025. So it's even bolder than the president's plan. And we are excited that we can get this implemented, because the bill not only saves consumers money, but it creates jobs and it

helps us seize important international economic opportunities. It is truly a technology-driven, innovative way. We hope that our colleagues, as an energy bill debate comes to the Senate floor, will consider these ideas. These are certainly the ideas we're going to be pushing for."

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