

## Michaud and Buyer Introduce VA Energy Sustainability Bill

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WASHINGTON, DC - Today, Congressman Mike Michaud, Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health, joined with Congressman Steve Buyer (R-Ind.), Ranking Member on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, in introducing the Department of Veterans Affairs Energy Sustainability Act of 2008 (H.R.6937).

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, Congressman Mike Michaud, Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health, joined with Congressman Steve Buyer (R-Ind.), Ranking Member on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, in introducing the Department of Veterans Affairs Energy Sustainability Act of 2008 (H.R.6937).

The bill would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to develop and implement strategic and long-term energy conservation and sustainability plans. VA is the second largest federal agency, and Ranking Member Buyer believes it should set the example for the wise use of energy resources. With hundreds of facilities nationwide including, hospitals, outpatient clinics and regional offices, VA's efficient energy policy could make a significant reduction in the overall national usage. The bill would also help severely disabled veterans to afford more energy efficient homes and vehicles.

"Today's energy crisis requires everyone to conserve," Michaud said. "The federal government should be doing everything it can to be on the leading edge of conservation. This legislation calls on VA to improve energy and water efficiencies and authorizes feasibility studies looking at increased use of alternative energy systems such as solar, wind, biomass and marine renewable power. These conservation efforts could save the VA millions of dollars, which can then be re-invested in enhancing veterans' benefits in the future."

"Addressing our nation's energy problem calls for multi-faceted solutions, including alternative fuels. Our government should be on the forefront in energy conservation and utilization of sustainable energy resources. Next to the Department of Defense, perhaps no other federal agency uses more energy than VA. Sustainable energy systems for VA facilities should include solar technologies and energy efficient roof and building envelopes that might utilize ballasted or vegetated roof systems. My bill would require a feasibility study of the use of such systems in Department buildings, and it would authorize \$7 million for alternative fuel stations at VA facilities," said Buyer.

H.R. 6937 would:

- Establish a VA Office of Energy Management, and an Advisory Committee on Energy Management and Sustainability.
- Direct the Secretary to implement a comprehensive sustainability program throughout the VA, and establish a database to track VA energy and water

expenditures, and provide an annual audit of energy.

- Ensure compliance with Presidential Executive Order 13423, relating to Energy Management within federal agencies, and VA Directive 0055, which pertains to its goals for energy efficiency and sustainability.
- Authorize installation of fueling stations for alternative fuels at VA facilities.
- Authorize a feasibility study and the installation of energy efficient and renewable energy systems in VA buildings.
- Establish the use of electrical sub-metering at VA buildings.
- Provide an additional amount of up to \$10,000 for high efficiency systems for veterans who qualify for VA adaptive housing grants.
- Provide severely disabled veterans who qualify for specially adapted auto grants an additional amount for purchase of alternative fuel vehicles.
- Allow VA to directly utilize the expertise of the National Laboratories regarding energy and water efficient technologies.
- Authorize the Secretary to conduct a pilot program for the sale of air pollution emission reduction incentives (also known as emission reduction credits or ERCs) and retain the proceeds from the sales.

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