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2D SESSION

H. R. 5529

To direct the President to seek to establish an international renewable energy agency to expand the availability and generating capacity of renewable energy to markets around the world in order to increase economic opportunity, drive technological innovation, enhance regional and global security, raise living standards, and reduce global warming pollution.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 4, 2008

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. TERRY, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOSWELL, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. HODES) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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A BILL

To direct the President to seek to establish an international renewable energy agency to expand the availability and generating capacity of renewable energy to markets around the world in order to increase economic opportunity, drive technological innovation, enhance regional and global security, raise living standards, and reduce global warming pollution.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Act of 2008''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Renewable energy technology will be critical for the United States and the world in overcoming dependence on oil and reducing levels of dangerous global warming pollution.

(2) The institutional support for renewable energy technology needs to be strengthened to match this growing level of importance to the United States and the world.

(3) International agencies have been formed on two occasions to address the unique problems and geopolitical dynamics associated with different energy sources: the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the International Energy Agency (IEA).

(4) The IAEA, formed in 1957, represents the culmination of President Eisenhower's ''Atoms for Peace'' proposal, emphasizing safe, secure, and peaceful use of nuclear technologies. Under the guidance and oversight of the IAEA, nuclear power has grown from supplying almost none of the world's

electricity at the IAEA's founding to nearly 16 percent in 2004.

(5) The IEA, formed during the 1973–74 Arab oil embargo, enhances energy security among oil consuming countries through an oil reserve and sharing program triggered in the event of an actual or potentially severe oil supply disruption. With IEA helping to counterbalance the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, global oil consumption has surged 47 percent over IEA's lifetime.

(6) Renewable generating capacity grew 26 gigawatts in 2005, expanding worldwide nonhydro renewable capacity to over 182 gigawatts. However, nearly two-thirds of this capacity lies in just six countries. Meeting the world's energy demands in the coming century while simultaneously reducing heat-trapping emissions and growing the global economy will require actions across nations to reform policy, expand markets for renewable energy technologies, and gather and disseminate information and best practices regarding renewable energy resources, and appropriate technologies.

(7) From 1970 to 2005, the direct cost to the United States of dependence on foreign oil was $7,000,000,000,000 (in constant 2000 dollars).

(8) Oil dependence harms the economy and consumers, entangles the military in foreign conflicts, and endangers public health and the environment through the threat of global warming.

(9) Significant public health, national security, and environmental costs are associated with the emission of greenhouse gases from the burning of fossil fuels. In the United States and many other countries, these costs are not currently paid by the polluters—a failure of competitive markets which leads to the overuse of carbon-emitting energy and the under-production of carbon-free energy.

(10) Annual revenue of solar, wind, and biofuel energy companies increased to $55,000,000,000 in 2006, a 39 percent increase over 2005. Venture capital directed towards energy technology has grown from less than $50,000,000 a year in 1996 to over $2,400,000,000 in 2006, representing nearly 10 percent of total venture capital investment in the United States.

(11) In the United States alone, over a billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions could be eliminated each year at a profit through energy efficiency measures by 2030, avoiding the construction of hundreds of power plants.

(12) Renewable energy tends to have higher construction and maintenance costs and low or zero fuel costs, while fossil energy has an opposite cost structure. This results in a higher number of jobs per unit of energy generated from renewable energy than conventional fossil fuels. The construction, manufacturing, installation, operation and maintenance jobs produced by a megawatt of photovoltaic solar, for example, is 7 to 11 times greater than the jobs generated by an equivalent amount of coal or gas generated electricity.

(13) The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has stated that to stabilize greenhouse gases at CO_2 equivalent concentrations of roughly 450–500 parts per million—where global temperature rise could be limited to 3.6–4.3°F and sea-level rise due to thermal expansion limited to 4.6 feet—global emissions would need to peak by 2015 and decline to as little as 15 percent of 2000 levels by the year 2050.

(14) In 2004, carbon dioxide emissions from Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries were surpassed for the first time by emissions from non-OECD countries. Carbon dioxide emissions from developing countries

are projected to account for over 75 percent of global emissions growth by 2030. Encouraging growth of renewable energy in developing countries reduces the extent and likelihood that these economies will follow a carbon-intensive, fossil energy development path.

(15) At least $20,000,000,000,000 of investment in energy generation and infrastructure will be needed worldwide in order to meet the world's energy needs in 2030 (in constant 2005 dollars). Energy generation and infrastructure typically turns over every 40 years, making near-term energy investment decisions instrumental in determining future emissions of greenhouse gases.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The President, acting through the Secretary of State and in coordination with the Secretary of Energy, shall immediately seek to establish an international renewable energy agency to be known as the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). In addition, the President shall direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to seek to establish such an international renewable energy agency.

(b) DUTIES.—The agency described in paragraph (1) should—

(1) support governments in establishing policies and programs that promote renewable energy and energy efficiency measures;

(2) assist in conducting country studies that analyze the potential of renewable energy;

(3) provide a global status report for renewable energy and review progress on the implementation of renewable energy programs and projects;

(4) provide long-term projections and scenarios in order to identify market potential, barriers to deployment, and failures in markets and policies, as well as plan for future demand for renewable energy;

(5) organize training programs, information campaigns, and courses relating to renewable energy for civil servants, scientists, businesses, and non-government organizations;

(6) assist in developing and supplying curriculum relating to renewable energy for schools and universities, including post-graduate education programs;

(7) cooperate with financing institutions to develop and support innovative financing mechanisms

to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency measures;

(8) facilitate the transfer of knowledge and best practices gained from successful renewable energy programs to interested member parties;

(9) develop common, nondiscriminatory international norms and quality standards including certification relating to renewable energy; and

(10) draft and disseminate statistics, technology information, reports on project implementation, and progress of legislation and policy programs relating to renewable energy.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The President shall seek to include in the membership of the agency described in paragraph (1) interested member states of the United Nations.

SEC. 4. REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to Congress a report on the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term ''energy efficiency measure'' means an improvement in process or technology that—

(A) reduces energy inputs for an identical level of service; or

(B) increases or enhances services for an identical amount of energy inputs.

(2) GREENHOUSE GAS.—The term ''greenhouse gas'' means—

(A) carbon dioxide;

(B) methane;

(C) nitrous oxide;

(D) hydrofluorocarbons;

(E) perfluorocarbons; or

(F) sulfur hexafluoride.

(3) RENEWABLE ENERGY.—The term ''renewable energy'' means an energy supply based on—

(A) solar radiation,

(B) solar heat,

(C) wind power,

(D) tidal or wave power,

(E) biomass,

(F) geothermal energy,

(G) small hydropower, or

(H) large hydropower,

if the energy supply is operated in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Dams and Development Project.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

To carry out this Act, there is authorized to be appropriated to the President $1,500,000 for fiscal year 2008.

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