



# Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Chairman

---

**NEWS RELEASE**

<http://finance.senate.gov>

For Immediate Release  
February 27, 2007

Contact: Carol Guthrie  
202-224-4515

## **Hearing Statement of Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.) America's Energy Future: Bold Ideas, Practical Solutions**

In the beginning, God began with energy: "God said: 'Let there be light.' And there was light."

We need to begin to think more about energy. Because when we flip on the switch, we still want the sentence to end: "And there was light."

America is too dependent on unstable foreign energy sources. Our energy needs are as ubiquitous as the light of day. So disruption of our energy sources could have devastating effects on our economy. Energy security thus affects our national security.

So America has a big energy problem. But America finds solutions to big problems.

Led by FDR in the 1930s and 40s, we beat Hitler to the first nuclear bomb, by instituting the Manhattan Project. About a decade later, an American found a cure for the disease that disabled FDR. A decade after that, we rose to the challenge of Sputnik and put a man on the moon. Two decades after that, thanks to a good, hard, American shove, we saw the empire that created Sputnik fall. I see no reason why we can't rise to the occasion on energy, as well.

Over the next weeks and months, I plan to hold more hearings on energy competitiveness, on energy conservation, and on oil, gas, coal, and alternative fuels.

Other committees are working on this as well. I want to acknowledge Senator Bingaman's leadership at the Energy Committee. We will look forward to working with them.

We need to solve this problem. And we haven't a moment to waste.

Today, we will get a feel for the energy landscape, from four key perspectives: states, science, the street, and security.

What's the answer to the energy problem? I believe that there are many.

I believe that we should start with another Manhattan Project — for energy. Today, I am introducing legislation to create an ARPA-E, an Advanced Research Projects Agency — Energy. ARPA-E would be a new research agency to help our nation solve the energy problem that we face.

The new agency would be modeled on DARPA — the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency — in the Department of Defense. Among the revolutionary technologies that DARPA developed are the internet and stealth technology for aircraft. DARPA has been a tremendous success. We can do the same with ARPA-E.

ARPA-E and other energy efforts will help develop new energy technologies. And these will lead to new products that Americans can sell.

I believe that other answers to the energy problem lie in alternative energy, in renewable energy, in conservation, and in more efficient use of conventional sources, with strong consideration for climate change. We have a responsibility to address climate change.

On alternative energy, I believe that we should keep moving on biofuels, such as cellulosic ethanol. I was pleased to see a cellulosic ethanol plant break ground in Louisiana a couple weeks ago. I'd be even more pleased to see one break ground in Montana, which has abundant biomass for cellulosic ethanol production.

I look forward to hearing what Dr. Arvizu has to say about the widespread production and use of cellulosic ethanol. I'm also looking forward to hearing Mr. Aimone's perspective on alternative fuel use in the Air Force.

Dr. Arvizu is director of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, a Federal laboratory that brings science from the research laboratory to the market and consumer use, primarily in the areas of renewable electricity and fuels.

And they say that Mr. Aimone knows more about the Air Force's efforts on alternative fuels than anyone at the Pentagon. He also happens to have spent a good many years in Montana, at Malmstrom Air Force Base.

On conservation, I believe that we should improve our energy efficiency. As Dan Reicher will explain, there are tremendous gains to be made simply by making good use of the energy that we have.

We can build smarter buildings. We can turn on more efficient light bulbs. We can produce and use electricity more efficiently. We can even do things as simple as turning off our computers at night. Turning off American computer monitors alone could save more than \$1 billion a year and millions of tons of greenhouse gases.

Dan heads Google's new Energy and Climate Initiatives. He can give us an overview of how the investment community can help America make gains in energy-efficiency.

*--1 more--*

And on more efficient use of conventional sources, we should keep working on ways to burn coal more cleanly. Montana has a great deal of coal — about eight percent of the world's coal reserves. We should make use of this abundant resource. And we should do so responsibly.

Sequestering the carbon emitted from coal-fired plants is the right thing to do, and I'm looking forward to hearing Dr. Robert Socolow's testimony on how we can do that. And Governor Schweitzer, Brian, I know you have more than a passing interest in this, as well.

I am very pleased to have with us today my good friend and Montana colleague Governor Brian Schweitzer. As governor since 2005, Brian has made energy policy the cornerstone of his administration. He's worked hard on renewable sources, ethanol, biodiesel, and the clean use of Montana's vast coal reserves. Brian, thank you for making the time to be with us today.

And Dr. Socolow is professor of physics at Princeton University, and co-director of The Carbon Mitigation Initiative. Dr. Socolow will explain that, when it comes to energy, there is no silver bullet, that there are many things that we can and should do on energy policy and climate change.

Back in the beginning, "God saw that the light was good." We have found it pretty good, as well. So let's begin to think and talk more about solving our energy problem, so that we can continue to let there be light, as far as the eye can see.

###