

# Energy

There are few issues of more central importance to our nation's future than our energy policies. Our reliance on dirty, destructive fuels imperils our environment and hurts American families. By shipping billions of dollars overseas every year to purchase fossil fuels from unstable, often hostile regions of the world, we threaten our national security and our planet's ecosystem.

There are no "silver bullets" in this fight, and it's going to take committed, nimble public policy to make our goals a reality. I believe we need to invest in a broad array of technologies and strategies to truly decrease our reliance on dirty, polluting fuels. We need a pragmatic approach that invests in renewable technologies like wind, solar, and fuel cells, while also responsibly exploring existing domestic sources of energy and expanding public transit. As a leader in the manufacture of everything from wind turbines to stationary fuel cells and hydrokinetic energy, Connecticut stands to benefit from this 21st energy revolution.

We have to make it attractive for homeowners and businesses to switch from fossil fuels to renewable options. We can't achieve these goals without providing incentives for their production like expanding existing tax credits and creating new tax incentives as technology emerges. The good news is that we have economics on our side - many of the renewable energy products on the market pay for themselves in the next electric bill, or over the course of a business plan. And in the long run, these investments will cut our carbon emissions, which will help us protect our planet.

And we can do this in our backyards. I'm leading the effort to retrofit and reactivate two old hydroelectric dams in Canton so they can be used to generate electricity. Once completed, these renovated dams will produce enough electricity to power nearly 2,000 homes.

We also need to make it easier for Connecticut consumers to save money, as volatile global oil prices can hurt families' and businesses' budgets. The wild run-up in oil prices we saw during 2008 hurt millions of families and helped plunge our economy into crisis. We can't allow irresponsible Wall Street speculators to recklessly drive up this price of gasoline and heating oil.

And we need to get serious about commuter rail. To that end, I am working to speed the expansion of commuter rail on the New Haven - Hartford - Springfield rail line, which runs through Wallingford, Meriden, Berlin, and Newington, among other stops to meet the demand in central Connecticut.

For me, it's not a question whether we need to change our national energy strategy, it's how do we do it. We have some of the most innovative minds in Connecticut and across the rest of the country working on this problem right now, and it's our job in Washington to set policy that looks ahead to what is possible, not back to what we know is costing us too much.

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