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Legislation Includes Renewable Fuels Provisions Important to Kansas

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today urged House and Senate negotiators to finalize an energy bill before Congress adjourns. The bill under consideration would create thousands of jobs nationwide, reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil, enhance domestic energy production, and increase the production of cleaner power. However, negotiations have slowed due to disputes over the final details of the bill.

"Provisions in this bill to increase our use of renewable fuels, rather than relying on foreign oil, will boost the demand for Kansas commodities and create jobs in Kansas," Moran said. "The promotion of renewable fuels is not only a positive step for the environment, but will generate new markets for Kansas products."

The energy bill under consideration includes several provisions to promote renewable fuels, such as ethanol, biodiesel and wind energy. Bio-based fuels represent a growing portion of the Kansas agriculture economy. Currently, six ethanol plants in Kansas produce 110 million gallons of ethanol, using 40 million bushels of corn each year -- about 15 percent of the Kansas corn harvest. If the state continues to follow the national trend, Kansas' ethanol production could increase to 250 million gallons a year, or about one out of every three bushels of Kansas corn.

To complement efforts in the energy bill, Moran recently sponsored legislation to change the tax structure on ethanol-blended fuels and to extend tax incentives to biodiesel used in vehicles. This provision would provide an additional \$1.4 billion to help maintain and improve roadways in Kansas and across the nation.

"The energy sector represents \$300 billion of the American economy, yet it has been more than a decade since Congress last passed a comprehensive energy policy," Moran said. "When the lights went out across the Northeast this summer, it further emphasized the need to review our current energy policies. We were close to having an energy bill last year and are even closer this year. We can't miss this opportunity to pass a comprehensive energy package."

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