



# NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION<sup>®</sup>

Northern Rockies Natural Resource Center

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## National Wildlife Federation Testimony in support of SB 210 January 25, 2007

I'm Tom France, the Director of the National Wildlife Federation's Northern Rockies Office in Missoula. I appear today in support of SB 210 which provides incentives to small business owners, renters and homeowners to make their homes and businesses more energy efficient. Not only will this legislation provide important benefits for Montana citizens, it is an important step in reducing overall energy demand, reducing our dependence on foreign oil supplies and reducing Montana's global warming footprint. The passage of SB 210 will increase national security and benefit Montana's economy.

### Senate Bill 210

#### To expand consumer and small business incentives for energy efficiency measures

The only reasonable way to help Montana energy consumers (homeowners, renters, and small businesses) reduce their rising energy bills in the short-term is through increased energy conservation and efficiency efforts.

- Energy efficiency and conservation is the quickest, easiest, most cost effective strategy to hold down energy prices and help Montana families and small businesses reduce their costs for energy.
- Expanded tax investments in energy conservation will create jobs, increase profits, and generate new tax revenue in Montana. The State of Oregon enacted an energy conservation tax credit in 2003 and then analyzed the economic growth realized after it enacted the business and residential conservation tax credit program. The analysis showed that job creation, new tax revenues, and the increase output in Oregon's economy paid back *more than 100%* of the tax credit investments *within one year*. And the increased profits realized by Oregon business will continue at the same annual rate for at least 15 years.
- According to EPA's ENERGY STAR program, the typical household spends \$1,900 a year on energy bills. Purchasing ENERGY STAR products can save about 30% of those costs—more than \$600 per year. Energy Star appliances, windows cost more, which is why we need tax credits on the front end of these purchases.

- Increasing energy conservation incentives will offer very important economic benefits to Montana. An increased demand for energy-efficient products and systems will create local jobs—increased business for hardware and appliance vendors and jobs for contractors who perform installation of weatherization products. Additionally, money saved on energy bills will be spent locally.
- Taxes paid by home improvement stores, home residential construction companies, and weatherization providers will help strengthen the area's economic base.
- Energy efficiency and conservation is also the quickest, easiest and most cost effective mitigation strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and global warming
- An energy-efficient home is more comfortable for occupants, which helps keep Montanans healthy, and holds a greater value in the marketplace.