

Today I am introducing an amendment to the Energy Policy Act to create a new conservation and research program, Conserve by Bike. This is something that we discussed the last time we had an energy program before us. This was approved by a voice vote. This legislation represents a small but important step forward towards determining our energy future.

There is much discussion on the floor about things that are mandatory. There are lots of things that make people cranky. This is one thing that will be able to help us move forward to actually take advantage of proven technology, and something that is a very positive development in each and every community across the country.

Bicycling, as virtually every Member of this assembly knows, is one of the cleanest, healthiest, most efficient and environmentally friendly modes of transportation that exists. It is the most efficient form of urban transportation in history.

As an alternative to automobile travel, bicycling can be an important element of a comprehensive energy conservation strategy. However, the relationship has not been adequately studied. The Conserve by Bike amendment recognizes that it is time to better understand the positive effects that bicycling can have on the conservation of our energy resources.

The amendment seeks to ensure that the Federal Government educates the public and provides appropriate research into the benefits of bicycling as it relates to energy conservation.

We are well aware of the health impacts. We are well aware of the opportunities that bicycling affords to young people, for example, to being able to have access to school.

This assembly, just last month, has approved in our transportation legislation, almost \$1 billion in Safe Routes to Schools. With ISTEA and TEA-21 we have increasingly supported bike facilities through State, Federal and local funding. This amendment will leverage these investments to help people take advantage of energy conservation choices they have in

getting around their community.

First, the amendment would establish a Conserve by Bicycling pilot program in the Department of Transportation, oversee up to 10 geographically dispersed pilot projects across the country designed to conserve energy resources, providing education and marketing tools to convert car trips to bike trips.

In addition, the projects would encourage partnerships between stakeholders from transportation, law enforcement, education, public health, environment and energy fields. The project results in energy savings must be documented, and the Secretary of Transportation is instructed to report to Congress the results of the pilot program within 2 years of implementation.

According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, bicycles are second only to cars as a preferred mode of transportation, demonstrating their potential for commuter use.

In recent years there have been significant upgrades to bicycling environments in the communities across the country. At a time when these communities are seeking to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, increase the safety of their neighborhoods, decrease petroleum dependence, bicycles offer a relatively simple, energy-saving alternative to driving. At a time when we talk seriously about transportation alternatives as an important component to comprehensive energy conservation strategy, this gives us the elements to make sure that we can document the impact.

The Conserve by Bike program is a critical step in the right direction. I strongly urge its adoption.