

81 Members of U.S. House Release Letter to Leadership Demanding Extension of 1603 Treasury Grant Program as Part of Tax Package

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Reps. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Mike Thompson (D-CA) and Rush Holt (D-NJ) joined representatives from the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), American Wind Energy Association (AWEA), Environment America, and the Blue Green Alliance in calling for an extension of the 1603 Treasury Grant Program (TGP) for renewable energy projects.

Since it was passed as a part of the February 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the TGP has sparked significant growth in American clean energy industries. The program is set to expire on December 31, 2010, but lawmakers and renewable energy advocates say that its expiration will cost America jobs and leadership in these promising renewable energy industries, and are calling for the Congress to pass an extension before the end of the year. At a press conference, the lawmakers announced a letter to House Leadership from 81 members of Congress – many of them members of the Sustainable Energy & Environment Coalition – in support of extending this program.

“We are asking you to include a two year extension of the convertible Treasury Grant Program (TGP) provided under Section 1603 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in any upcoming tax legislation,” **the letter to House leadership reads**. “This program has proven that it will increase jobs, increase the market share for U.S. renewable energy companies, and reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy.”

“If the White House and Congress are serious about breathing life into our economy with this tax package, it will include critical clean energy provisions,” **said Sean Garren, Clean Energy Advocate for Environment America**

. “Wind, solar and geothermal, among other renewable energy industries, have been a bright light in an otherwise dim economy these past few years. It would be unconscionable for the 111th

Congress to leave without extending these critical investments, thus dimming the lights for clean energy and our economy.”

“Moving America to the clean energy economy means job creation,” **said Michael Williams,**

Legislative Representative for Blue Green Alliance

. “Congress has an opportunity to make a dent in the jobs crisis and the global race for clean energy leadership by including two highly successful programs in the pending tax package: additional funding for the Advanced Manufacturing Tax Credit (48C) and an extension of the Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program. Failure to pass these two credits will show a lack of leadership regarding the future of U.S. Manufacturing and the clean energy economy.”

“This tax credit has helped create a \$20 billion American wind energy industry with 85,000 jobs and 400 manufacturing facilities,” **said Denise Bode, CEO of the American Wind Energy Association**

. “Wind now generates 20 percent of the electricity in Iowa, and has generated as much as 25 percent of the electricity in Texas. That is only a fraction of what’s possible if this tax credit is extended. In a nation still recovering from a ruinous recession, letting this very successful policy lapse would be a mistake of historic proportions.”

“Section 1603 is a job-creating machine that has allowed over 1,100 projects to move forward in 42 states,” **said Dan Adamson, Vice President for Government Affairs for the Solar Energy Industries Association.**

“Extending it will help the solar industry put tens of thousands of Americans back to work.”