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Udvalget om Miljø, Folkesundhed og Fødevaresikkerhed

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UDKAST TIL UDTALELSE

fra Udvalget om Miljø, Folkesundhed og Fødevaresikkerhed

til Udvalget om Industri, Forskning og Energi

om energieffektivitet - eller hvordan vi kan få mere ud af mindre
(2005/2210)

Rådgivende ordfører: Péter Olajos

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SHORT JUSTIFICATION

There are several reasons why energy efficiency should be promoted in Europe. Decoupling economic growth and energy demand and achieving a reduction in the overall energy consumption is essential for Europe to reach its goals regarding sustainable development and the fight against climate change.

The recent crisis related to the distribution of Russian natural gas supplies, has put the spotlight on Europe's dependence on imported energy sources, which is projected to increase substantially in the years to come. Curbing our energy demand could be an important part of the solution to this problem. Improving energy efficiency is also likely to have a positive effect on employment in Europe and will help boost the competitiveness of European industry and is thus fully in line with the aims of the Lisbon strategy.

For the above reasons, the Draftsman welcomes the Commission Green Paper and the increase in Community efforts to improve energy efficiency.

Regarding the goals set in the Green Paper, these were determined at a time when oil prices were around 30 USD/barrel, whereas today, they are as high as 70 USD and expected to rise even further. This increase makes it seem appropriate that more ambitious targets be set than the 20% reduction of energy consumption outlined in the Commission proposal.

As a result of improved technology, appliances, vehicles and buildings are now available which use much less energy than before. A quick diffusion of these new technologies can help realise the potential for energy savings that we have today. However, we must be aware that replacing older products with new ones earlier than necessary has a series of negative environmental implications such as increased waste, more pollution as well as the consumption of raw materials during the production process. The Draftsman strongly believes that at all cost we must avoid sending a false message to the European consumers and public procurement agents that they can best help the environment by throwing everything away prematurely.

The compulsory labelling of household appliances under Directive 92/75/EEC has proved a great success and lead to significant improvements in the energy performance of these products. It is precisely this improvement which makes it necessary to systematically review the labelling categories to keep up with technological change by ensuring that the labels remain clear, giving valid information to consumers so as not to mislead them. (Today's refrigerator models, for example, are all rated above category C, but the labels still show a scale of A-G, which gives a false perception of the energy performance of a refrigerator with the rating of B.) The Draftsman believes that the effect of labelling systems could be further enhanced if labels were required to provide estimates of the actual operating costs during the life of the product in question.

Buildings are the largest users of energy in Europe and also have vast potential for increasing efficiency. Since only a small part of Europe's building stock represents the newest technological standards, it is necessary to invest in improving the energy performance of older buildings and not just establishing standards for new constructions. The Draftsman believes that priority should be given to housing estates of high rise blocks of flats where the savings

potential is the highest.

District heating systems are potentially more efficient than separate production, but in most places where these exist (notably the new Member States), the facilities operate with a great loss of energy. Therefore it is also very important to promote the modernisation of these systems, preferably linked to the modernisation of the buildings they supply. The Draftsman believes this is necessary in order to avoid local imbalances between the demand and the supply of heat.

The Draftsman believes that financing the initial investment is most often the main obstacle in the way of - otherwise beneficial - energy efficiency projects. Therefore he considers it important to promote new and innovative forms of financing, through Energy Service Companies (ESCO-s) and clearinghouse facilities, the creation of which generally requires external incentives. He believes that the great financial institutions, such as the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (BERD) and the World Bank also have a greater role to play in financing energy efficiency investments and should be encouraged to take up this responsibility.

FORSLAG

Udvalget om Miljø, Folkesundhed og Fødevaresikkerhed opfordrer Udvalget om Industri, Forskning og Energi, som er korresponderende udvalg, til at indarbejde følgende forslag i det beslutningsforslag, det vedtager:

1. gør opmærksom på, at de oliepriser, som ligger til grund for grønbogens energisparemål på 20 %, nu er væsentligt højere, hvilket medfører en betydelig stigning i energieffektivitetsforanstaltningernes omkostningseffektivitet; opfordrer derfor Kommissionen til at sætte energisparemålet højere i overensstemmelse hermed;
2. understreger, at målet for energiforbrugende apparater (samt bygninger og køretøjer) bør være at begrænse den generelle miljøpåvirkning i hele deres levetid; opfordrer Kommissionen til at igangsætte yderligere undersøgelser, også i byggesektoren og hvad angår køretøjer, med henblik på at fastsætte minimumslevetiden (herunder det miljømæssigt set bedste tidspunkt at erstatte disse apparater med nye på);
3. mener, at mærkning er en effektiv måde at fremme energieffektivitet på, og opfordrer Kommissionen til fortsat at bevæge sig i denne retning ved systematisk at evaluere de forskellige former for mærkning, der er fastsat i direktiv 92/75/EØF, udvide mærkningen til flere former for apparater samt køretøjer og indføre mærker, som oplyser forbruger om de reelle omkostninger;
4. understreger behovet for at udvide anvendelsesområdet for direktiv 2002/91/EF om bygningers energimæssige ydeevne til også at omfatte alle former for renovering og sikre hensigtsmæssig finansiering med henblik på at fremskynde renoveringen af de boligblokke, hvor der er de bedste muligheder for besparelser; mener, at disse projekter om muligt bør kombineres med renovering af de fjernvarmeanlæg, der leverer varme til disse bygninger;
5. understreger nødvendigheden af, at medlemsstaterne vedtager nationale handlingsplaner om energieffektivitet på grundlag af obligatoriske årlige mål;
6. understreger behovet for at fremme oprettelsen af clearing houses og Energitjenesteselskaber (ESCO) med henblik på at lette gennemførelsen af energieffektivitetsprojekter;
7. anmoder Kommissionen og medlemsstaterne om at opfordre de store finansieringsinstitutter til at prioritere investering i energieffektivitet højere og overveje forskellige energieffektivitetsaspekter ved udvælgelsen af projekter, der kan modtage finansiering.