



Southwest Energy Efficiency Project
Saving Money and Reducing Pollution through Energy Conservation

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
February 3, 2006

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ENERGY ASSISTANCE ON THE WAY TO LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

(Boulder, CO) -- The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) applauds the Colorado legislature and Governor Bill Owens for enacting legislation that will provide both energy bill payment and energy efficiency assistance to low-income households throughout Colorado. The bill is a significant improvement over legislation adopted in previous years, which was for bill payment assistance only.

“Low-income households should receive \$19 million in energy efficiency assistance over four years as a result of the legislation. Energy efficiency improvements are a long-term solution to the high energy cost burden faced by low-income households, in contrast to bill payment assistance which is just a band-aid,” stated Howard Geller, Executive Director of SWEEP. Energy efficiency funding will go towards dissemination of low-cost efficiency measures, heating system repair or replacement, home weatherization, energy education, and efficiency improvements in new housing built for low-income families.

The \$19 million in energy efficiency funding supplements limited federal funding that is provided for these purposes. The new funding approved in this legislation will come from the state’s oil and gas severance tax fund, and will be managed by the Governor’s Office of Energy Management and Conservation.

SWEEP estimates that 70,000 low-income households could receive help in lowering their energy use and energy bills as a result of this legislation. Low-income households could reduce their energy bills by about \$57 million as a result of this initiative, approximately \$3 in energy bill savings for every \$1 invested in energy efficiency measures. “Energy efficiency assistance provides a much greater ‘bang per buck’ than simply passing out money to help low-income families pay their energy bills,” Geller added.

About SWEEP: The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) is a public interest organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency in Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. For more information, visit the SWEEP website at www.swenergy.org.