



PRESS RELEASE

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**UTILITY ENERGY EFFICIENCY BILL WILL SAVE MONEY AND WATER
Consumers and Businesses Will Benefit from Senate Bill 129**

(Denver, CO) – A utility energy efficiency bill introduced by Sen. Peggy Reeves (D-Fort Collins) will help Colorado’s struggling economy while reducing the amount of water used in the state. The bill sets energy savings targets for Colorado’s larger utilities, directing them to save the equivalent of one percent of their retail electricity sales each year. Xcel Energy is currently the only large utility that would be impacted.

“This bill is a win-win opportunity for consumers, businesses, and the environment in Colorado. The energy savings targets will save consumers and businesses money on their utility bills, money that can be pumped back into our struggling state economy” said Sen. Reeves. “And saving electricity means saving water since conventional power plants use a great deal of water in electricity production.”

The bill is modeled on legislation adopted over a decade ago in Minnesota, Xcel’s home state. In Minnesota, businesses and consumers enjoy a full set of energy efficiency programs, programs that Xcel’s own studies show are cutting energy waste and saving hundreds of millions of dollars each year.

“Given the success that Xcel has demonstrated in operating under these rules in Minnesota, one has to ask, why are they not providing Coloradans with the same standard of services and programs?” stated Howard Geller, Executive Director of SWEEP, the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project. “With Xcel having publicly stated that they would prefer to not operate any energy efficiency programs, the time has come for Colorado’s elected officials to step in and ensure that Xcel acts in a responsible way in this state.”

SWEEP estimates that the bill would save consumers and businesses in Colorado over \$1 billion net during 2003-2020. Water consumption in the state would drop about 850 million gallons per year by 2010 and 2.3 billion gallons per year by 2020, the latter being equivalent to the water use of nearly 13,000 households.

“We are facing a recession and severe drought. That means we need common sense policies to save money and save water,” added Sen. Reeves. “The legislature and governor should seize this opportunity to cut energy waste.”

About SWEEP: The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) is a public interest organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency as a means of promoting both economic prosperity and environmental protection in the states of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. Visit the SWEEP website at www.swenergy.org.