



## Union of Concerned Scientists

Citizens and Scientists for Environmental Solutions

February 16, 2005

Governor James Doyle  
Office of the Governor  
115 East  
State Capitol  
Madison, WI

Dear Governor Doyle,

We, the undersigned organizations wish to express our profound disappointment with the cuts to Wisconsin's state-wide Focus on Energy program proposed in your budget for the 2005-07 biennium. The Focus program, as you know, provides energy efficiency and renewable energy programs to residents and businesses throughout Wisconsin.

You have proposed to cut \$53 million, or 41% percent, of the \$130 million that will be provided over these two years by the charge on ratepayers' utility bills for energy programs that are supposed to be of direct benefit to them. Instead, that \$53 million will be diverted into the general fund. Your proposed funding level for the public benefits programs will be the same as the last biennium even though the state's fiscal picture has improved and even though ratepayer contributions to the fund will have increased by an estimated \$6 million.

Making homes and businesses more energy efficient is the cheapest, most cost-effective strategy for reducing utility bills, reducing pollution from power plants, creating jobs, and keeping energy dollars in Wisconsin's economy instead of sending them to other states or overseas. Focus on Energy returns nearly 6 dollars to the Wisconsin economy and environment for every dollar invested.

In our view, diversion of these funds represents a tax on consumers. We are also very concerned that the eventual cuts to the Focus program may be even deeper. In the last, 2003-5, biennium budget negotiations, you had originally proposed a 20% diversion of the funds, which was then increased by the legislature to 37%.

Your proposal to divert \$53 million undercuts a principal aim of your Task Force on Energy Efficiency and Renewables. The Task Force called for fully funding and strengthening the Focus on Energy program and also called for increasing the amount Wisconsin's electricity that is produced with renewable sources such as the wind, sun, and agricultural materials, and other efforts to increase energy efficiency and renewable energy. As you know, these recommendations received unanimous support from task force members, including Republican and Democratic legislators, electric utilities, business associations, organized labor, consumer groups, and environmental organizations.



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Our groups will ask the legislature to restore the cuts to these vital energy efficiency and renewable energy services. We also expect that your administration, together with the legislature, will proceed to do everything in your power to implement the recommendations of the Task Force on Energy Efficiency and Renewables.

Sincerely,

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