

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-FL 13) sided with Governor Crist in opposing legislation that would damage Florida's effort to develop alternative energy sources. The bill would result in an estimated \$14 billion electricity tax on Floridians by imposing unrealistic renewable energy mandates on state utilities.

Buchanan in January voted for the Clean Energy Act, which funded investments in alternative energy sources without resorting to punishing rate hikes for consumers.

"I believe that the path to energy security begins with an affordable plan that invests in research and development, increases fuel standards and reduces our dependency on foreign oil," Buchanan said. "The bill we are voting on today fails to achieve that goal. I will not support legislation that would lead to steep rate hikes in the electricity bills of Floridians."

"The energy bill before us today has been updated to include increased fuel efficiency standards, which I support; but, it would also result higher energy costs for Florida businesses and consumers. My constituents are already struggling to pay sky-high property insurance rates and property tax increases. The last thing they need is higher energy costs.

"The bill would also upset Florida's state based renewable programs that are already in place. Gov. Charlie Crist has expressed opposition to the energy bill's renewable energy provisions saying, 'While Governor Crist has laid out an ambitious goal of reaching 20 percent by 2020, he opposes a federal 'one-size-fits-all' mandate. It is Florida's position that individual States can best determine what is attainable in their State and should be allowed to set standards tailored to their specific capabilities and needs.'

"We must become less dependent on foreign sources for the gas to fuel our cars and oil to heat and cool our homes. I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to produce an affordable energy bill that the President will sign to increase our Nation's energy security by encouraging federal investments in energy conservation and efficiency as well as domestic energy sources."