



ENERGY POLICY: Lugar prepping bill that could include CES

(02/11/2011)

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Republican Sen. Richard Lugar is crafting broad energy legislation that could include a "clean energy" mandate similar to the one President Obama called for in his State of the Union address.

The Indiana Republican this week said his bill, which is still "weeks away," could include a clean energy standard as well as "energy efficiency in many, many facets."

Lugar introduced a bill last year that would have required increased fuel efficiency standards for cars and trucks, new efficiency requirements in building codes and federal buildings and incentives to retire the most-polluting power plants. His bill last session also would have created a "diverse energy standard" requiring utilities to source a percentage of their electricity from renewables, nuclear energy, "coal-mined methane," waste-to-energy and coal generation with carbon capture and storage.

Lugar would not say whether his new bill would resemble last year's language. But he indicated he is open to the idea of including a so-called clean energy standard like the one the president called for last month. Obama has not yet defined his clean energy standard, but he said in his address that he would like to see it include renewables, nuclear and "clean coal."

"Yes, that's where we are at the present time," Lugar said of the possible inclusion of clean energy standard language. "That seems an advisable course."

Lugar's willingness to include a clean energy standard reflects a departure from comments he made earlier this month that he would prefer including his more broadly defined diverse energy standard in the bill.

"I have a different standard. I'm cognizant of the value of the clean energy standard. Appreciate the suggestion but that would not be the one I would include," Lugar said earlier this month.

But Lugar has supported clean energy standard language in the past. Last summer, he signed onto a measure with fellow moderate Republican Sens. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska that would set long-term fuel efficiency standards for motor vehicles, promote energy efficiency in buildings, provide \$54 billion in loan guarantees for new nuclear power plants and set up a national clean energy standard.

A spokesman for Lugar said staff-level discussions were ongoing with other lawmakers, including Democrats, and the policy research firm ClimateWorks. No official collaborators have signed on yet, but Lugar's spokesman is optimistic about the chances of finding bipartisan support.

"The one we wrote last year, that was the intent, that this was a bill that everybody could embrace," spokesman Mark Helmke said. "But the administration decided not to last year. Now, maybe they will this year."

Lugar said right now he is focused on crafting the legislation rather than finding co-sponsors.

"We want to find the elements that seem to be the best, whatever their source may be right now, and then we'll seek other people to help us," he said.