

**TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM E. TAYLOR, DIRECTOR,
TEXAS STATE ENERGY CONSERVATION OFFICE AND CHAIR, THE NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF STATE ENERGY OFFICIALS
BEFORE THE
HOUSE AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG
ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE**

March 26, 2008

Chairperson DeLauro and members of the Subcommittee, I am Dub Taylor, Chairman of the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO). NASEO is submitting this testimony in support of funding of the Energy Title (Title IX) of the 2002 Farm Bill, especially Section 9006. Section 9006 provides funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts for farmers, ranchers and rural small businesses. **We strongly recommend funding of no less than \$60 million for Section 9006, and we would certainly urge consideration for \$5 million of funding for the Section 9005 energy audit/assessment program within this funding level.** NASEO has worked with farmers, our state agricultural agencies and rural interests to promote this successful program. As we face dramatically increasing energy bills for all sectors of the economy, it is critical that we do more to address the energy problems of rural America.

Chairperson DeLauro, we know that you recognize the importance of the agricultural energy programs, as well as the state energy activities. You led the successful floor amendment to restore funds for the State Energy Program during the debate on the FY'06 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill, and all the state energy offices are indebted to you for your contribution to a broad-based national energy policy. Recognizing your outstanding efforts, NASEO was pleased to present you with the National Energy Efficiency Advocate Award.

As the debate continues over the new Farm Bill, we strongly urge you to fund the critical energy programs within the 2002 Farm, and we hope a robust energy title will be passed as part of the new Farm Bill. We hope that in calendar year 2009 (and hopefully FY'09), Congress and the Administration will jointly push forward with a comprehensive energy funding program, including robust appropriations for the agriculture sector. Greater energy efficiency and renewable energy use in the farm sector will help create jobs, reduce climate change, increase agricultural productivity and improve the environment. If significantly increased energy funding can be provided for the energy title of a new Farm Bill, then we would hope that rural schools and other public institutions could be covered by Section 9006. This could effectively combine with efforts through the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill, such as the State Energy Program, biorefineries, expanded alternative fuels programs, alternative fuels infrastructure, etc. On the tax side, a long-term extension of the production tax credit and investment tax credit for renewable energy, energy efficiency tax credits and deductions and other related programs, could combine with these appropriations and energy policy changes to bring about significant improvements in our Nation's approach to energy.

In FY'07, \$73 million was requested from applicants for Section 9006 loans and grants. In FY'08 Congress provided \$36 million for the Section 9006 program. A minimum of \$60 million for this effort in FY'09 is necessary to maintain the momentum and expand participation. We hope for even more funding in the future.