

1. ENERGY POLICY: Draft jobs package has \$11B for efficiency; details expected Thursday (01/26/2010)

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Senate Democrats are set to unveil official details on a jobs package Thursday that will likely include several energy incentive provisions.

A draft Senate jobs bill proposal dated Jan. 24 outlined an \$82.5 billion bill with funding in four major job creation categories: small business export promotions and lending, energy efficiency, infrastructure, and the public-service sector. The energy efficiency section totals \$11 billion for home retrofits and manufacturing plant retrofits, and the transportation and infrastructure projects add up to \$30.5 billion, according to the draft.

Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.), chairman of the Democratic Policy Committee, would not reveal any specific provisions about the bill today, although he did confirm there will be a couple of provisions on energy efficiency. The bill could use \$75 billion in unused funds from the Troubled Asset Relief Program, or TARP, to offset the approximately \$80 billion package, Dorgan said.

Senate leaders and Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) last week discussed the tax portions of the bill, including lifting the cap on the current \$2.3 billion clean energy manufacturing tax credit, the extension and expansion of "Build America" bonds, and a tax credit for new hires, according to sources and a one-page memo that was reportedly discussed at the meeting.

Baucus said he and Senate leaders were discussing the package, but no details were confirmed. "We need and will have a jobs bill, but I don't know what it is yet," he told reporters.

"We're all together," he added. "We're going to do a jobs bill together."

Dorgan confirmed that his preference would be to do one larger jobs package. "We hope to initiate a jobs bill that we think is the right approach, and if we can't get it done, we will probably break it up into parts," he said.

Energy bill, take two?

The energy bill that passed out of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee last June ([S. 1462](#)) will not be transformed into a jobs bill, Dorgan said.

Energy and Natural Resources Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) also quashed speculation that his renewable energy standard would be included in the jobs bill.

"What they're trying to do with this jobs package is identify things that will create jobs in 2010," Bingaman said. "And it's harder to make the case this will create jobs in 2010. It's very good policy, something I strongly support, but I think we may have to do it as part of an energy bill."

Bingaman added that he hoped to get both residential and commercial efficiency retrofitting included in a jobs bill but said he had not gotten personal assurances that it would be in.

Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), who is leading negotiations to develop a bipartisan climate bill that may join with the energy bill, said he supported keeping the energy bill provisions largely intact.

"There's automatically going to be some small component in terms of the green jobs piece of this," Kerry said. "That's good. That's fine. But I think the larger pieces require a more comprehensive approach to energy."

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), ranking member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said she is concerned that Democrats are planning to use the panel's bipartisan energy bill for a politically driven jobs campaign.

"I'm always hesitant to use a good bill for something with added baggage," Murkowski said. "We passed a good energy bill out of committee, a bipartisan energy bill, months and months ago. Nobody paid any attention to it. It just didn't exist. And now, all of a sudden, they need something."

Senior reporter Darren Samuelsohn contributed.