



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
June 6, 2005

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SECOND ENERGY EFFICIENCY BILL VETOED BY GOVERNOR OWENS ***Households in Colorado will spend \$700 million more for natural gas as a result***

(Denver, CO) – The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) and Environment Colorado criticize Governor Bill Owens for vetoing House Bill 1133 on June 3rd. HB 1133 would have stimulated energy conservation programs by Colorado’s natural gas utilities.

“Governor Owens has demonstrated once again that he is no friend of consumers in Colorado. Natural gas prices have surged over 50% in the past two years. HB 1133 would have helped households reduce their natural gas use and consequently their soaring energy bills,” stated Howard Geller, Executive Director of the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP). SWEEP estimates that HB 1133 would have resulted in \$700 million in net savings for households in Colorado.

HB 1133 also directs the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to establish a cost recovery mechanism and provide a positive financial incentive for natural gas utility energy conservation programs. As a result, the legislation was supported by gas utilities such as Xcel Energy and Kinder Morgan.

SWEEP and Environment Colorado worked closely with utilities and businesses in crafting this legislation. There was no opposition to the final version. “HB 1133 was a win-win policy for consumers and gas utilities in Colorado. The Governor’s veto makes no sense,” said Stephanie Bonin, energy advocate for Environment Colorado. HB 1133 was sponsored by Rep. Tom Plant (D-Nederland) and Sen. Ken Gordon (D-Denver).

Governor Owens’s veto of HB 1133 follows his veto of House Bill 1162 this past April. HB 1162 would have established state energy efficiency standards on 14 products not covered by federal standards. “The Colorado legislature is trying to help consumers and businesses save energy and cut their excessive energy bills. But Governor Owens is standing in the way. We need more responsible leadership in our state,” added Geller.

About SWEEP: The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) is a public interest organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency in six southwest states. See www.swenergy.org.

About Environment Colorado: Environment Colorado is the statewide environmental organization dedicated to protecting Colorado's air, water and open spaces. See www.environmentcolorado.org.