"The House of Representatives must lead by example, and it is time for Congress to act on its own carbon footprint."

-Speaker Nancy Pelosi, April 19, 2007
Improving energy efficiency is the most effective first step that any organization can take to make a positive effect on the world we live in and that we leave to our children and grandchildren.

- House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, April 19, 2007

“Today we say that the Capitol will be not just a shining symbol of our democracy, but a symbol of our commitment to the future. Not only by the power of our ideas on energy independence, but by the power of our example, we hope to send a message to the world and to the country.”

- Speaker Nancy Pelosi
June 21, 2007
Green the Capitol Goals

- Carbon neutral by Dec. 2008
- 50% energy consumption reduction over 10 years
- Model of sustainable operations
Operations Data

- 6.1 million square feet
- Oldest building – 1793
- Newest building – 1965
- 10,000 employees
- 1.2 million visitors/year
- $1.2 billion annual budget
Obstacles

- Size of the House of Representatives
- Age of the buildings
- Unique organizational challenges
- Facilities management history & incentives
- “Fish Bowl” effect
The Road to Carbon Neutrality

1. Purchased renewable wind power for 100% of electricity use.
2. Switched from coal to natural gas in Capitol Power Plant for House.
3. Purchased carbon credits to offset additional 24,000 tons of greenhouse gas.
Low-Hanging Fruit: CFLs & Recycled Paper

- 30,000 CFLs
- 100% post-consumer recycled paper
Vending Machines

- Installed 84 energy-efficient vending machines
- Energy Star vending machines save 8-9 kWh per day
- Switch saves over $25,000 per year
Computer center operations

- We spend as much on energy as hardware
- By consolidation of servers, we plan to decrease energy consumption by 45% this year
Rayburn Building duct sealing

- Duct leakage represents an enormous waste of energy, typically leaking 20-30% of the energy.

Large unintentional opening in the duct system (right) and potential duct opening (center).
Sustainable food service

- All serviceware compostable
- Organic, locally-grown foods
- New compostable collection stations
Transportation

- E-85 fueling station
- Car sharing
- First all-electric vehicle for the House
Green Teams

- Allows employees to volunteer and support greening efforts
- About 150 offices now participating
Night Lighting Policy

- Ask offices to turn lights off after hours
- Ask every office to designate and register a “lighting steward” to switch off the lights
- Ask cleaning crews to turn off lights after nightly cleanings
Relighting the Dome

- Moving to relight the Capitol Dome with energy-efficient lighting
- New system will reduce operating costs by 75% and bring the Dome up to par with other memorials
Lessons Learned

- Not that difficult
- Carbon is a useful measure
- Good intentions aren’t enough
- Support from the top
- Keep on truckin’, but be prepared for setbacks
The biggest challenge is, how do you change people, how do you get them to take your effort seriously?

The biggest problem is human nature. How do you get people to feel comfortable with change?

Chief Administrative Officer Dan Beard
Instant Feedback

BLUEPRINT FOR A GREENER CAPITOL

- Wind Power
- Solar Panels
- Hot Air Turbines
- (K Street) Karbon Sequestration