



**Senate Business & Commerce Committee**  
**Written Testimony Presented by Curt Seidlits, *TexasIsHot* Coalition**  
**March 24, 2009**

Mr. Chairman and committee members, it is a pleasure to talk with you today about an issue important to all of us in Texas – a more efficient use of energy.

I have had the privilege of working on energy issues for the past 20 years as a legislator, president of a trade association and for a company providing electricity to Texas customers. And while electric issues are often complex, there is one constant - the ability to control consumption is the easiest and quickest option to lower electric bills, help the environment and promote our state and nation's energy independence.

That idea is encompassed in many of the policy discussions across the country and in the energy efficiency bills that you are addressing today.

In terms of potential savings, the numbers relating to energy efficiency are staggering. A recent report by the Texas Comptroller's office states that simple solutions can help Texas homeowners save between 20 and 30 percent on their electric bills, an average savings of between \$1,700 and \$2,500 over five to seven years. A 20 to 30 percent savings for every Texas family amounts to nearly \$2 billion in annual statewide savings.

No overall plan to reduce energy consumption will be complete unless we fundamentally change the way Texans think about their own energy use. Using energy more efficiently will require a more energy conscious consumer that not only embraces, but demands energy innovation.

As a state, we promote energy efficiency in our government buildings, our schools and our businesses because it makes economic sense. This same principle applies to residential use – but consumer education is critical to make an immediate and profound impact on energy consumption in our state.

There have been several studies done in the last year to identify potential methods for providing home energy efficiency information to Texas consumers: most notably the Comptroller’s 2008 Home Energy Efficiency Report (required by HB 3070 passed by the 80th Legislature) and the Itron report commissioned by the PUC to estimate energy efficiency potential in Texas and to respond to the Texas Legislature’s questions regarding energy efficiency goals and policies.

The Comptroller’s report concluded that the key to a concerted effort for energy efficiency lies with consumer education. Informed consumers empowered with credible home energy efficiency information that is both easy to understand and actionable can make better energy decisions when weighing efficiency upgrades or when evaluating a home for purchase. The report recommended creating a high-profile Texas brand for home energy efficiency to use on all public awareness materials; and building a comprehensive website to promote home energy efficiency with Texas-specific information, tips and resources.

Additionally, one of the Itron report recommendations was to consider establishing a stronger statewide marketing organization to increase general awareness of energy efficiency products and access to energy efficiency service suppliers, because a concerted effort to raise general awareness and provide more specific targeted marketing will increase the level of energy and dollar savings in Texas.

There is no doubt Texans need a comprehensive place to go to find information on efficiency and to quantify the financial impact of various energy efficiency measures within the market. That is why we recently launched the *TexasIsHot* Coalition.

*TexasIsHot’s* mission is to fundamentally change the way Texans think about their energy use.

Coalition goals include:

- Educating Texas consumers about energy efficiency;
- Providing tools to change habits and lower consumption;
- Highlighting investments, new technologies and public policy initiatives related to energy efficiency; and
- Strengthening Texas' energy efficiency leadership.

The centerpiece of the *TexasIsHot* campaign is a website - [www.TexasIsHot.org](http://www.TexasIsHot.org) - which provides simple tips, easy to use tools and real-time information to decrease energy consumption and help Texans save money. The coalition website serves as the online headquarters and provides the latest energy efficiency news, quick and easy tips to conserve electricity, and interactive tools for consumers to analyze usage and the financial impact of conservation. [TexasIsHot.org](http://TexasIsHot.org) will also provide a forum for Texans across the state to share energy saving stories and ideas.

The *TexasIsHot* Coalition will harness the power and depth of the Internet to make it as easy as possible for people to make the efficient use of energy a normal part of everyday life. The Internet has changed the way people get their information and in the age of Facebook, MySpace, widgets and text message campaigns, the *TexasIsHot* campaign will be on the cutting edge of real-time information delivery.

As part of the overall awareness and education campaign, *TexasIsHot* is working to proactively engage Texans across the state via an aggressive and coordinated outreach program. Activities will include:

- Comprehensive and updated website content;
- Sophisticated and unique online energy usage tools to quantify the financial impact of using energy more efficiently;
- Regular e-mail communications with timely energy efficiency news, tips and information;
- Coordination with elected officials to promote energy efficiency and related policy discussions among constituents; and
- Localized educational forums utilizing businesses, chambers of commerce, city governments, local electric providers, policymakers and other interested leaders to promote this issue in communities across the state.

*TexasIsHot* coalition members currently include:

Association of Electric Companies of Texas;

Oncor;

CenterPoint Energy;

TXU Energy;

Entergy;

Luminant; and

Time Warner Cable.

We are working to partner with additional companies and organizations from a variety of industries and backgrounds to ensure that the campaign is as comprehensive and far-reaching as possible.

With the *TexasIsHot* campaign we want to provide tips, tools and accurate information to educate Texans to use energy more efficiently and save money in the process. A little energy goes a long way.

Thank you for the opportunity to talk to you today. I am happy to answer any questions.