

October 11, 2007

Re: Advanced building codes provision in energy bill

Dear Representative/Senator:

The undersigned manufacturers, designers, utilities, state agencies, and environmental, consumer, and energy-efficiency organizations urge you to support section 9031 in the House energy bill (H.R. 3221) in the energy bill conference, in order to initiate a dramatic improvement in residential and commercial building energy codes throughout the United States. This provision would set national targets for improvements to building energy codes and would encourage more states to meet them. But contrary to some claims, under this proposal states and local governments would still be in charge of building energy codes in their jurisdictions, and independent organizations would still set national model codes.

The potential impact is remarkable. If model building energy codes are strengthened by 30 percent in 2010 and 50 percent in 2020—and if all states implement the codes—the Alliance to Save Energy estimates that by 2030 our nation could save 5 percent of its total energy use (6 quadrillion Btus), save consumers \$50 billion a year, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions equal to taking 70 million cars off the road (100 million tons of carbon). The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy estimates that section 9031 will save more energy and do more to avoid global warming than any other provision in the House energy bill. This provision also will reduce both demand on the power grid and stress on natural gas supplies, and improve local air quality and health.

Recent reports from the Western Governors' Association, the National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency, and the National Petroleum Council have emphasized the importance of stronger codes to make homes and commercial buildings more efficient. The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-conditioning Engineers, which sets model building energy standards for commercial buildings, is already working in partnership with the Department of Energy to improve its model code by 30 percent by 2010.

We commend the House for supporting strong building codes, and we urge you to support retaining this provision, without weakening amendments, in the energy bill conference.

Sincerely,

Alliance to Save Energy

American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

American Institute of Architects

American Public Power Association

Atlas Roofing Corporation

BASF Corporation

Business Council for Sustainable Energy
CertainTeed
Conservation Law Foundation
Consumer Federation of America
Dryvit Systems
Duke Energy
Edison Electric Institute
Edison International
Energy Center of Wisconsin
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
Environment Northeast
Firestone Building Products Company
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Greenpeace USA
Guardian Industries
Honeywell Building Solutions
Hunter Panels
IKO Industries, LTD.
Johns Manville
Knauf Insulation
Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance
National Association of State Energy Officials
National Audubon Society
National Fenestration Rating Council
National Grid
National Insulation Association
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
National Wildlife Federation

Natural Resources Defense Council
North American Insulation Manufacturers Association
Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships
NSTAR Electric & Gas
Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel
Orion Energy Systems
PG&E Corporation
Physicians for Social Responsibility
PNM Resources
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association
Rmax, Inc.
Sacramento Municipal Utility District
Sierra Club
Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance
Southwest Energy Efficiency Project
Union of Concerned Scientists
U.S. PIRG
Vermont Energy Investment Corporation
Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation

Added later:

Ceres
Environmental Law & Policy Center
Insulation Contractors Association of America
Kinetix [business ecology]
KyotoUSA
National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients
PPG Industries