

April 16, 2021

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,  
and Related Agencies  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
Chair  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,  
and Related Agencies  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable David Joyce  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, Chair Pingree, and Ranking Member Joyce:

We write in support of increasing FY2022 appropriations to a total of \$80 million for the Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR program, a highly successful public-private partnership that delivers tremendous impact in addressing climate change and generating consumer energy savings that has nonetheless seen declining funding in recent years.

With broad bipartisan support and nationwide brand recognition above 90%, ENERGY STAR is among the most impactful energy and climate programs in the federal government. With a current budget of just under \$40 million, ENERGY STAR delivers a remarkable bang for the buck in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 330 million metric tons of avoided emission reduction each year – roughly 5% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions annually. Since the program began in 1992, it has accounted for more than 3.5 billion metric tons of greenhouse gas reductions, equivalent to removing 750 million cars from the roads.

Meanwhile, the program saves American consumers and businesses more than \$35 billion annually in avoided energy costs. A typical household can save \$575 per year by buying ENERGY STAR labelled products. Additionally, thousands of businesses, utilities, states and local governments depend on ENERGY STAR as a national framework for energy efficiency progress, relying on it in their product designs, energy management programs, building efficiency initiatives, and manufacturing practices.

With additional resources, the program is poised to significantly expand its impact. Yet in recent years, ENERGY STAR has instead seen its funding steadily decline, from a high of nearly \$54 million a decade ago to just \$39.4 million today. Merely adjusting for inflation would yield a flat budget of \$65 million in today's dollars versus a decade ago. These funding cuts have restricted ENERGY STAR's ability to keep up with fast-changing markets and to expand the program's reach in sectors where large untapped energy savings are available.

For example, as cities and states across the country increasingly rely on ENERGY STAR's Portfolio Manager platform for benchmarking commercial building energy use, increased funding could bolster data collection to capture additional building types and provide local communities and building owners with much-needed technical support. Additionally, ENERGY STAR's tenant spaces program, initiated by Congress, will roll out this summer for office tenants. With funding, the program could expand to include retail, warehouse, and other tenant types, reaching hundreds of thousands of businesses to enable savings. Increased funding could strengthen the consumer products program by expanding and better marketing the ENERGY STAR "Most Efficient" initiative highlighting best-in-class products, particularly in product categories where a high percentage of available products already meet standard ENERGY STAR performance. Other opportunities include expanding residential ENERGY STAR programs for home efficiency, including encouraging new "smart home" components or other bundled improvements to existing homes. Finally, within the Federal portfolio, increased ENERGY STAR funding could support streamlined and updated methods for tracking energy-saving performance data, saving time and reducing government spending.

Our request to effectively double ENERGY STAR's funding to \$80 million reflects the urgency to address climate change to avoid far bigger public costs. We know that Congress is looking for innovative, cost-effective, and high-impact approaches for achieving emissions reductions while also boosting economic productivity. ENERGY STAR meets all of those criteria through a voluntary, market-based program with a relatively low cost and with enormous untapped potential.

We look forward to discussing this proposal further, and please don't hesitate to contact Ben Evans ([bevans@ase.org](mailto:bevans@ase.org)) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Cc:

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro  
Chair  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations

Room H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
Room H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515