



February 24, 2020

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Joe Manchin
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Manchin:

We appreciate your work to develop a bipartisan energy package that promotes energy efficiency by incorporating the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act (ESICA – S. 2137) and other energy efficiency provisions. We write today to express our strong support for including ESICA in its entirety, including Sections 101 and 102. These sections are among the most impactful provisions in the bill, delivering tremendous energy savings and improved housing affordability by promoting building energy codes.

Eliminating these important codes provisions would remove most of the efficiency savings from ESICA. As a result, while there are meaningful efficiency initiatives in other sections of the bill, we regretfully cannot support a legislative package that further weakens ESICA by omitting these provisions.

This decision comes after repeated compromises made by energy efficiency advocates in working on ESICA in its many forms over the last decade, and with the knowledge that these provisions enjoy the support of an unusually broad coalition of businesses and advocacy organizations – including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Leading Builders of America, and the National Association of Manufacturers. That broad support is why ESICA has repeatedly cleared the Committee with bipartisan support, and why a previous legislative package containing the bill passed the Senate with 85 votes in the 114th Congress.

We are troubled by repeated claims that ESICA's voluntary codes provisions would raise the cost of home ownership. Extensive research demonstrates the opposite: that while there is an upfront cost of efficiency improvements in a new home, those costs are quickly overtaken by ongoing energy cost savings, which last for decades. The fact is that homeowners with more efficient homes end up with far more money in their pockets. Alaskans and West Virginians particularly understand the burden that energy costs can have. According to the ACEEE analysis, sections 101 and 102 significantly lower the cost of homeownership in Alaska, West Virginia, and nationally once energy costs are accounted for.

We respect and admire your leadership on this issue. We believe this is a terrific opportunity to drive efficiency gains throughout the U.S. economy by passing the full ESICA legislation with broad, bipartisan support, and to deliver enormous benefits to consumers and businesses in the form of lower energy bills, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and improved productivity.

Sincerely,

Ben Evans
Vice President, Government Affairs and Communications
The Alliance to Save Energy