

March 3, 2020

Dear Senators,

We write on behalf of our millions of members and supporters, to urge you to vote in favor of an amendment which would restore vital building codes language originally found in the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act (S. 2137, Portman-Shaheen) to the American Energy Innovation Act (AEIA) of 2020.

Sections 101 and 102 of S. 2137, which would encourage but not require more effective building energy codes at the state level have by far the largest impact on energy efficiency of any provision in Portman-Shaheen, so leaving them out of AEIA seriously lessens that bill's impact on reducing carbon emissions and encouraging energy savings. The American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy estimates that the improvements from these provisions to residential and commercial energy codes will result in more than \$41 billion in net savings to Americans from buildings built through 2050 – and that includes accounting for any increase in construction costs. The codes-related sections in the bill will also reduce carbon emissions by 1.2 billion metric tons, equivalent to the emissions from 250 million cars for a year.¹ These provisions account for 88% of the energy savings and the carbon savings of the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act. Model energy codes under sections 101 and 102 remain voluntary and are adopted by states or local jurisdictions.

Better building codes are good for homeowners and businesses, and they simply make common sense. Over a decade, building codes have already saved consumers and businesses more than \$60 billion on their energy bills, according to the Department of Energy.² There are more savings to be had. We know how to make buildings more efficient but need this legislation to further strengthen the Department of Energy's code-related efforts. Sections 101 and 102 of S. 2137 provide critical technical and financial support for states, Indian tribes, local governments, code and standard developers, and others. These sections have broad stakeholder support from a diverse coalition of efficiency advocates, housing advocates, and efficiency industry groups. Making buildings efficient at the time of construction will reduce energy and carbon emissions from the start. Building efficiently means avoiding costly future retrofits and a better, more efficient and resilient housing stock.

We urge you to vote in favor of this amendment.

Sincerely,

Alliance to Save Energy
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE)
Environmental Defense Fund
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
E2 (Environmental Entrepreneurs)

¹ <https://www.portman.senate.gov/sites/default/files/2020-02/ACEEE%20ESICA%20Analysis%202-10-20.pdf>

² <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2016/12/f34/Codes%20Fact%20Sheet%2012-28-16.pdf>

Institute for Market Transformation
League of Conservation Voters
National Association of Energy Service Companies (NAESCO)
National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO)
Natural Resources Defense Council
National Wildlife Federation
Sierra Club
Third Way
Union of Concerned Scientists
U.S. Green Building Council