

November 18, 2020

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
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 Betty McCollum
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Udall
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 McCollum, Ranking Member Joyce, Chairman Murkowski, and Ranking Member Udall:

As you work to complete Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations legislation, we write to urge you to adopt report language accompanying the House-passed bill on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies calling for a modest increase in the EPA's ENERGY STAR program.

ENERGY STAR is an immensely popular program, with brand recognition above 90 percent nationally. It is also among the most impactful energy and climate programs in the federal government. With a current estimated budget of \$38.4 million, ENERGY STAR saves American consumers and businesses more than \$35 billion annually in avoided energy costs – yielding a return of more than \$900 for every \$1 in public funding – while sharply reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). In fact, the 330 million metric tons of avoided GHG that ENERGY STAR delivered in 2018 represents about 5% of total U.S. GHG emissions annually.

Despite this success, ENERGY STAR has seen its funding significantly reduced in recent years, from a high of nearly \$54 million a decade ago to just \$38.4 million today. In addition to its consumer benefits, thousands of utilities, state and local governments, and businesses have built programs and product lines around ENERGY STAR and depend on it as a national framework for energy efficiency progress, relying on it in their product designs, energy management programs, building efficiency initiatives, and manufacturing practices.

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 residential program could be expanded and improved to drive efficiency improvements in new and existing homes. 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 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.

The House report language (H. Rept. 116-448), included below for quick reference, would be a significant step forward in rebuilding ENERGY STAR’s capacity to address these needs:

ENERGY STAR. — The Committee continues to support the ENERGY STAR program and rejects the proposed shift to a fee-based funding mechanism. The Committee provides \$42,000,000 for its continued operation. With this increase in funding, the Committee expects the Agency to prioritize the following priority areas: increased technical support, data collection and data analysis in the Portfolio Manager program, particularly with state and local partners, including school systems; increased promotion of the ENERGY STAR Most Efficient program; the ENERGY STAR for tenants program; and increased capacity in the products division. The Committee expects the program to accomplish these objectives through increased FTEs and contracted services. Further, the Committee supports the Agency’s efforts to reexamine ENERGY STAR with guidelines and standard operating procedures to ensure transparency, predictability, and consistency for all stakeholders.

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

Sincerely,

Alliance to Save Energy
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy
Building Performance Association
E4TheFuture
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
Institute for Market Transformation
National Association for State Community Services Programs
National Association of State Energy Officials
Natural Resources Defense Council
U.S. Green Building Council

Cc:

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

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member

U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
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The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairman
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
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