

March 5, 2020

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

Re Written Testimony on FY2021 Appropriations. Contact: Ben Evans, Vice President, Alliance to Save Energy, bevans@ase.org

Dear Chairman McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce:

We write in support of increasing appropriations to a total of \$60 million in FY 2021 for the Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR program, one of the most effective public-private partnerships in the federal government that nonetheless has seen its capacity reduced in recent years by declining funding.

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 budget of just under \$40 million, ENERGY STAR saves American consumers and businesses more than \$30 billion annually in avoided energy costs – yielding a return of \$750 for every \$1 in public funding. A typical household can save \$575 per year by buying ENERGY STAR labelled products. Additionally, thousands of businesses, states and utilities 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.

ENERGY STAR produces similarly impressive bang for the buck in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution. The program delivers 290 million metric tons of avoided greenhouse gas emission reduction each year - roughly five percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions annually, and about the same as removing 62 million cars from U.S. roads.

Despite this success, ENERGY STAR has seen its funding gradually yet significantly reduced in recent years, from a high of nearly \$54 million a decade ago to just \$38 million today. These funding cuts have restricted its ability to keep up with fast-moving technology and markets and to expand the program's reach in sectors where large untapped energy savings could be had.

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 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...

Specifically, we call on Congress to increase the program's budget in Fiscal Year 2021 to a total of \$60 million. This would not only ensure that ENERGY STAR continues to produce independent, objective and reliable information that delivers meaningful energy savings to consumers and businesses, but that it can expand into new sectors of the economy to strengthen its impact.

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
Green Business Certification Inc.
U.S. Green Building Council