

Support Market-Driven Consensus-Based Building Energy Codes in the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016

May 11, 2015

Senator Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee

Senator Barbara Mikulski
Committee Vice Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairwoman Mikulski:

As a broad coalition of energy efficiency and environmental organizations, state associations, small and large businesses, and public interest groups, we are writing to urge you to support building energy codes and standards in the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016.

Residential and commercial buildings use approximately 42% of America's energy, making the buildings sector not only one of the single largest consumers of energy, but also one of the greatest opportunities for reducing wasted energy, water, and money. A key strategy for increasing energy and water efficiency is through support for model building energy codes and standards, which are developed by private, nonprofit organizations.

Building energy codes and standards directly reduce the utility bills of home and building owners and occupants, which stabilizes utility grids, delays the need for new power plants, helps protect fragile water infrastructure, and benefits consumers, businesses, and taxpayers, and our nation's energy security. Model building energy codes and standards are developed through consensus-based procedures that involve any and all interested and affected stakeholders. Local and state jurisdictions are deeply involved in finalizing model codes then adopting them as a whole, or with changes to meet particular needs and circumstances.

Currently, the U.S. Department of Energy plays a significant and necessary role in the development, adoption, and implementation of market-based model building energy codes, creating proposals based on publicly reviewed cost and technical analysis, providing technical assistance to states and localities upon their request, and convening public forums that encourage the exchange of information, leading to cost-effective energy savings. However, recent language included in the report for the House-passed Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (H.R.2028) could undermine the development, adoption, and implementation of model building energy codes by restricting the Department's engagement with these codes.

To offset this harmful language we request your support for including the following or similar language in the final text or report of the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016:

“Consensus-based, market-driven model building energy codes and standards provide energy, water, and cost-savings to businesses, consumers, and taxpayers, and are used widely at all levels of government. The Department plays a significant and necessary role in the development, adoption, and implementation of model building energy codes, creating proposals based on publicly reviewed cost and technical analysis, providing technical assistance to states and localities, and convening public forums that encourage the exchange of information.”

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request. We welcome the opportunity for further dialogue on these issues to better inform you and your staff on the benefits to consumers, businesses,

taxpayers, the economy, and the environment of consensus-based model building energy codes. We look forward to working with you on these and related matters.

Sincerely,

AEC Science & Technology, LLC
Air Barrier Association of America, Inc.
Alliance to Save Energy (ASE)
American Chemistry Council (ACC)
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE)
American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)
American Society of Interior Designers (ASID)
American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)
APPA – Leadership in Educational Facilities
Armstrong Filtration
ASHRAE
Association of Energy Engineers
Center for Small Business & the Environment
EIFS Industry Members Association (EIMA)
Energy Efficient Codes Coalition (EECC)
Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI)
Green Building Initiative (GBI)
Illuminating Engineering Society (IES)
Institute for Market Transformation (IMT)
Insulated Metal Panel Council
International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO)
International Code Council (ICC)
LonMark International
Malachite LLC
Mechanical Contractors Association of America (MCAA)
National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO)
National Fenestration Rating Council
National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS)
National Insulation Association
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
NEBB
North American Insulation Manufacturers Association
Passive House Institute US (PHIUS)
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association (PIMA)
Saint-Gobain NA
Sheet Metal & Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association (SMACNA)
Smart Buildings Institute
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM)
Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance (SPFA)
SPRI, Inc.
Structural Insulated Panel Association
SUN DAY Campaign
U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)
Water Quality Association

Cc:

Senator Mitch McConnell
Senator Richard Shelby
Senator Lamar Alexander
Senator Susan Collins
Senator Lisa Murkowski
Senator Lindsey Graham
Senator Mark Kirk
Senator Roy Blunt
Senator Jerry Moran
Senator John Hoeven
Senator John Boozman
Senator Shelley Moore Capito
Senator Bill Cassidy
Senator James Lankford
Senator Steve Daines
Senator Patrick Leahy
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Richard Durbin
Senator Jack Reed
Senator Jon Tester
Senator Tom Udall
Senator Jeanne Shaheen
Senator Jeff Merkley
Senator Chris Coons
Senator Brian Schatz
Senator Tammy Baldwin
Senator Christopher Murphy