



# Shaping Tomorrow's Global Built Environment Today

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Bill McQuade  
ASHRAE Society President, 2025-2026

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The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair  
The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chair  
The Honorable Jeff Merkley, Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment & Related Agencies  
United States Senate

The Honorable Mike Simpson, Chair  
The Honorable Chellie Pingree, Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment & Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the members of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), we want to call your attention to two important programs of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and urge you to provide continuing funding for these vital programs. Specifically, we ask that you continue supporting the indoor air quality (IAQ) programs managed under EPA's Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA) and the ENERGY STAR program in the Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations bill at current funding levels.

ASHRAE, founded in 1894, is a professional and technical society of more than 54,000 members who focus on building systems, energy efficiency, IAQ, refrigeration, and resiliency within the built environment. Through research, standards development, publishing, certification and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow's global built environment today.

### *EPA's Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA)*

This office at EPA has provided vital technical information to communities to reduce health risks from pollutants in indoor environments. When wildfires hit communities, ORIA has quickly acted to disseminate information to states and tribes to help communities protect themselves from wildland fire smoke. When public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic struck, ORIA provided vital information to schools, business, and families so that they could stay safe and continue living their lives.

To keep kids in school and reduce health care costs, ORIA provides vital information to reduce asthma and flu cases. The technical resources ORIA distributes saves lives, keeps health care costs down, and is good for the economy.

As a technical society, ASHRAE develops important technical guidance and standards to keep homes and businesses healthy. Specifically, ASHRAE develops voluntary IAQ standards, guidance to mitigate the impact of smoke on IAQ, and voluntary standards to control infectious aerosols. ORIA helps disseminate these technical resources, which leverages the work of the private sector to make America healthier and more prosperous.

Poor indoor air quality has significant long-term health effects, contributing to chronic diseases like asthma and lung cancer. Mitigating the long-term health effects of indoor air quality protects Americans and reduce healthcare burdens on families and the economy. One study estimates the U.S. economy could gain \$26 billion annually with improved indoor air quality due to a 35% decrease in sick leave. Studies have also shown clean indoor air boosts economic productivity and improves learning outcomes. It is vital EPA continue investments that promote good indoor environmental quality as they yield measurable returns in attendance, cognitive performance, and reduced liability and health costs. These benefits are also in line with President Trump “Make America Health Again” initiative.

#### EPA’s ENERGY STAR Program

ASHRAE shares the concerns of a broad spectrum of businesses and organizations in the consumer products, manufacturing, real estate, and retail sectors, in strongly opposing any funding reduction or elimination of the successful ENERGY STAR program. With ASHRAE’s focus on the built environment, we are particularly concerned about any reduction of federal support for the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager.

While it may appear that EPA’s ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager only benefits building owners and managers, the use of this critical tool benefits all Americans as it reduces load on the electrical grid and protects vital water supplies. As the demand for electricity from data centers continues to increase rapidly and as droughts threaten communities, reducing energy and water use from buildings is important for the security and prosperity of America. Using Portfolio Manager allows building owners and manager to identify under-performing buildings, set investment priorities, verify efficiency improvements, and receive EPA recognition for superior performance. Last year alone over 330,000 buildings—comprising nearly 25 percent of U.S. commercial building floor space—utilized Portfolio Manager. Given the widespread use of this program, it would be difficult to replicate it in the private sector. Additionally, several of ASHRAE privately developed voluntary consensus-based standards depend on Portfolio Manager for implementation. This is critical as voluntary consensus standards allow the government to leverage private sector expertise and resources. Ultimately, consensus-based standards protect public health and safety, saves taxpayers money, encourages long-term growth for U.S. businesses, and promotes the global competitiveness of American enterprises. Clearly, this program not only plays a critical role in the building industry but provides a vital service to the American people.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. If we can provide any additional information or serve as a resource, please do not hesitate to contact me or have your staff contact [GovAffairs@ashrae.org](mailto:GovAffairs@ashrae.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill McQuade". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "B" and "M".

Bill McQuade  
ASHRAE Society President, 2025-2026