

# Taxes and Appropriations Group

*This letter was developed by the Taxes and Appropriations Group, a coalition which is coordinated by the Alliance to Save Energy.*

*January 23, 2009*

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye, Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-131 Capitol  
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Minority Member, United States Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S 146-A Capitol  
Washington DC 20150

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Minority Member Cochran,

We write to urge you to support clean energy investments as part of the Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which will be considered by your Committee shortly. This bill is the opportunity and great starting point for our nation to invest in building the green economy of the future, as well as the opportunity to secure the appropriations that have been so urgently needed to realize the potential of energy efficiency and clean energy programs to reduce carbon emissions and help consumers and businesses cut their energy bills. We urge the Senate Appropriations Committee to consider our requests for the following programs:

- **Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).** We recommend that the Committee fund the WAP at no less than \$6.2 billion. This would allow for this critical program to expand several-fold to meet President Obama's goal of weatherizing one million low-income homes per year. WAP is an invaluable program for countless families whose homes leak energy year-round and who suffer from impossibly high energy bills as a result. This level of investment is estimated to create 32,000 jobs in auditing and retrofitting
- **State Energy Program (SEP).** We recommend that the Committee fund SEP at no less than \$3.4 billion. This would permit states to bolster their energy-efficiency programs throughout the economic crisis. The SEP program delivers vital energy efficiency services and innovations. In addition, giving priority to investment towards existing state approved programs will allow funds to be invested in expanded energy efficiency programs quickly. SEP is the most flexible vehicle for delivering energy efficiency services to all sectors of the economy.

- **EPA Energy Star Program.** We strongly urge the Committee to provide \$100 million in funding for the EPA Energy Star Program. This program is a key part of the national pipeline system for delivering energy efficiency. States, local governments, utilities and retailers rely on EPA support in using ENERGY STAR products, tools, and resources to deploy efficiency programs rapidly and effectively. It is also responsible for creating a market for energy efficient appliances and for ensuring that the standards for attaining the Energy Star label are continuously raised to encourage continuous improvement in the industry. The Energy Star program also includes important programs to help middle-income homeowners weatherize their houses and to improve the efficiency of commercial buildings; programs that states and municipalities can leverage with their share of stimulus funds. Without additional funding, other stimulus-bill efficiency funds will not be used as effectively. This modest investment will help the states make best use of the total federal energy efficiency investment. Energy Star is a “force multiplier.”
- **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program.** We urge the committee to provide no less than \$4.2 billion for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program to assist local and state governments in developing and implementing comprehensive energy efficiency strategies.
- **Federal Buildings.** We urge the Committee to provide \$6 billion for construction, repair and alteration of federal buildings. In order to ensure that facility-related projects in other civilian agencies also maximize opportunities to reduce environmental impact and improve energy efficiency, we recommend that funding be designated for energy management across civilian agencies to tap their enormous energy-savings potential. Projects using such funds should be comprehensive and comply with the measurement and verification requirements of Section 432 of EISA 2007.
- **Building Codes.** We also recommend \$100 million for the Building Energy Codes Program. This program promotes energy efficient building codes, training and technical assistance. The states are working to upgrade energy efficient building codes, but a massive new effort at training local building inspectors, code officials, contractors, builders, utility personnel and architects is needed to get these upgrades accomplished.
- **ESPC Contract Ceiling.** We are concerned that a number of Energy Savings Performance Contracts that would improve the efficiency of federal buildings have been stalled by the Department due to a failure to lift the applicable contract ceiling. If the ceiling is not lifted soon many of the contracts will have to be re-negotiated - a process that would take at least a year. We urge Congress to provide that the Department lift the contract ceiling issue as soon as possible so that the Administration's efficiency goals and the statutory requirements for federal building efficiency can be realized.

In the Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act we have the opportunity not only to create jobs and provide relief to American families but also to revolutionize our energy future and our national energy

security, and to put in place infrastructure that will save money on energy for many years. All of this is possible with adequate investment in energy efficiency. We urge you to adopt these recommendations to make an already very strong economic recovery bill even stronger.

Very truly yours,

Alliance to Save Energy  
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy  
American Gas Association  
The Dow Chemical Company  
Environmental and Energy Study Institute  
Environment Northeast  
Johnson Controls, Inc.  
National Association for State Community Services  
National Association of State Energy Officials  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
North American Insulation Manufacturers Association  
Orion Energy Systems  
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association  
The Stella Group, Ltd.  
Whirlpool