

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 28, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski, Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Udall, and Ranking Member Feinstein:

We write to express our deep concern over President Trump's proposal to defund the ENERGY STAR program in the FY2018 budget. ENERGY STAR is an example of government working at its best: a voluntary program that typically recognizes the 25% most energy-efficient equipment and buildings, ENERGY STAR benefits consumers with huge savings for every dollar of its relatively modest budget. In 2015, with funding of approximately \$50-60 million, ENERGY STAR helped consumers and businesses save over \$34 billion on their utility bills – a return on federal investment of over 500 to one. It is difficult to understand why ENERGY STAR, a program that has saved families and businesses hundreds of billions of dollars and enjoyed bipartisan support for 25 years, would be shut down.

The program's results explain why about 90% of Americans know and recognize the ENERGY STAR brand, making it arguably the most powerful icon of energy efficiency in the United States. And energy efficiency is a goal that benefits everyone: saving energy means more money for families to pay for education, healthcare, and retirement. It means that American manufacturers are staying competitive and building better products. Having energy-efficient homes and factories means we use less electricity during peak times, which increases grid security and lowers blackout risk. And reduced electricity use means lower power plant emissions, cleaner air, and healthier Americans. In fact, since ENERGY STAR's creation, the program has resulted in 2.7 billion metric tons of avoided greenhouse gas emissions – the same as taking 23 million cars off the road for 25 years.

Furthermore, ENERGY STAR's benefits have been the foundation for economic growth: 2.2 million Americans work in some capacity on the design, production, or installation of ENERGY

STAR products. Over 16,000 retailers, manufacturers, and other businesses partner with the ENERGY STAR program, which spans more than 70 product categories. In 2015 alone, 89,000 households hired 1,600 contractors to make efficiency upgrades as part of ENERGY STAR's Home Performance program. And not least of all, many state governments and utilities may use ENERGY STAR to implement their own energy efficiency plans.

Over the past year, many citizens and elected officials have expressed their discouragement over the divisiveness that characterizes our current political climate. But ENERGY STAR is a remarkable exception to this sentiment: a program that helps American families and businesses at every level, while advancing energy efficiency – a long-cherished conservative value – and all the economic and environmental benefits that go with it. We strongly encourage you to preserve ENERGY STAR at current funding levels in the FY2018 appropriations process.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley in blue ink.

Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley

Handwritten signature of Senator Margaret Wood Hassan in blue ink.

Senator Margaret Wood Hassan

Handwritten signature of Senator Brian Schatz in blue ink.

Senator Brian Schatz

Handwritten signature of Senator Sheldon Whitehouse in blue ink.

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse

Handwritten signature of Senator Benjamin L. Cardin in blue ink.

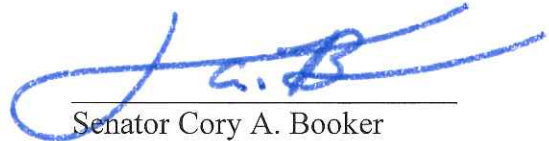
Senator Benjamin L. Cardin

Handwritten signature of Senator Jeanne Shaheen in blue ink.

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Handwritten signature of Senator Bernard Sanders in blue ink.

Senator Bernard Sanders

Handwritten signature of Senator Cory A. Booker in blue ink.

Senator Cory A. Booker


Handwritten signature of Senator Al Franken in blue ink.

Senator Al Franken

Handwritten signature of Senator Maria Cantwell in blue ink.


Senator Maria Cantwell


Senator Jack Reed


Senator Tim Kaine


Senator Christopher A. Coons


Senator Tammy Baldwin


Senator Kamala D. Harris


Senator Mark R. Warner