

May 20, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-107, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As businesses, trade and industry associations, and residential energy efficiency stakeholders we urge you to quickly and immediately support the bipartisan HOPE for HOMES Act of 2021, which includes immediate and long-term initiatives to save the residential energy efficiency contractor industry from hardships incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic - getting them back to work helping homeowners, multifamily property owners, and renters save energy and money by investing in clean, efficient technology.

As soon as the nation began shutting down in response to the pandemic, America's energy efficiency workforce – the biggest energy workforce in the nation – began to dissolve. A report from E2 found that, over the course of 2020, the energy efficiency sector shed a net of nearly 272,000 jobs, an 11% decline that wiped out the last three years of job gains. The residential energy efficiency sector has been particularly hard hit by the crisis, as residential contractors conduct most of their work via physical visits to homes. Many homeowners and renters remain hesitant to invite contractors indoors, and it is vital that we support these contractor companies that face the difficult decision of laying off employees in order to save their businesses.

Now is the time to help these small businesses re-hire and prepare for a new stage of significant advancement of America's existing home infrastructure. It is crucial that we invest in our workforce and ensure that contractors across the country have equal access to training, given the current patchwork of state COVID-19 reopening guidelines.

The Contractor "Home On-line Performance-based Energy-efficiency" (HOPE) Training would provide immediate support to contractor businesses, with \$500 million to help companies pay their contractors to undertake online training to advance their understanding of home performance. HOPE provides a stipend for contractors who complete the HOPE Training and are prepared to advance their careers and

help property owners save energy and money through home retrofits. These stipends would act as a lifeline as well as a pathway to participate in the Home Owner Managing Savings (HOMES) program once the pandemic subsides. Because the training is available online, contractors from all states would have access to these courses and would be able to invest in workforce development.

HOPE would be paired with a \$8.4 billion Home Owner Managing Savings (HOMES) rebate program, to be authorized through 2026 (or until expended). The HOMES program would provide rebates to homeowners and multifamily property owners who undertake energy efficiency home retrofits, thereby supporting contractor small businesses who are providing energy efficiency products and installations for their customers. HOMES rebates are a reason contractor companies will risk retaining or rehiring employees, because the rebate program would be available as social-distancing requirements remain in place in 2021. It would also create a vital stimulus – encouraging property owners to undertake energy retrofits and driving demand for these highly trained workers. This will result in the creation of local jobs that cannot be outsourced, and a massive upgrade to this nation’s residential housing stock.

The HOMES rebate program would create incentives for homeowners and multifamily property owners to invest in energy efficiency improvements through a multi-part rebate program to support states with a diversity of building stock, energy program expertise, and contractor workforce skills and help these states to advance the efficiency, health, and safety of their properties. The HOMES program will also spur the creation of important jobs in contracting, manufacturing, and retail sales of energy efficient technologies and products. Contracting jobs are inherently local, and many will be provided by small business contractors. The HOPE for HOMES Act would support these small businesses and local job creation across the country during a time of urgent need.

We urge you to support and advance the bipartisan HOPE for HOMES Act of 2021 and encourage its inclusion in any federal infrastructure stimulus or climate legislation. This bill will give these workers the tools they need to not just keep or reacquire their jobs, but to advance their careers during these trying times while simultaneously stimulating the economy and paving the way for a massive upgrade of our nation’s residential building stock and improve the efficiency, resiliency, health, and safety of homes of American families across the country.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact Kara Saul Rinaldi at 202.276.1773 or kara@anndyl.com with any questions or for more information.

Sincerely,

Advanced Energy Economy
Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA)
Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI)
Alliance to Save Energy
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE)
Association for Energy Affordability, Inc.
Basement Health Association
Building Performance Association (BPA)
Building Performance Institute
Connecticut Efficiency for All
Clean Energy Business Network (CEBN)
E4TheFuture
Energy Efficiency Alliance – New Jersey
High Performance Insulation Professionals (HPIP)

Institute for Market Transformation
Insulation Contractors Association of America (ICAA)
Johnson Controls
Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance
Knauf Insulation
LIUNA
Minnesota Housing Partnership
Mitsubishi Electric Trane HVAC LLC
National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)
National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP)
National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO)
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Housing Trust
North American Insulation Manufacturers Association (NAIMA)
NRDC
PACE Nation
Piedmont Housing Alliance
Pearl Certification
Recurve
Sierra Club
Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP)
U.S. Green Building Council
VEIC

CC:

Chairman Joe Manchin
Ranking Member John Barrasso
Chairman Frank Pallone
Ranking Member Cathy McMorris Rodgers
HOPE for HOMES House and Senate Cosponsors