

## **HOPE for HOMES Act of 2021**

**Background:**

As soon as the nation began shutting down in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, America’s energy efficiency workforce—the biggest energy workforce in the nation—was immediately impacted. A recent report from E2 and E4TheFuture found that the energy efficiency sector suffered a net loss of 272,000 jobs, or 11% of the EE workforce since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak. The residential energy efficiency sector has been particularly hard hit, as residential contractors conduct most of their work via physical visits to homes. Providing support for these contractor companies to guard against more layoffs is vital. To help these small businesses re-hire and invest in the EE workforce, we must prioritize non-traditional methods like online training to prepare the sector for the next stage of advancement for America’s existing home infrastructure: energy efficiency. Investments in these virtual training measures are critical to ensure contractors across the country have equal access to training, despite the discrepancies between state reopening orders. Prioritizing energy efficiency will not only help us substantially combat the climate emergency right now, but it will also save American families money on energy costs and create thousands of jobs.

**Bill Summary:**

The HOPE for HOMES Act of 2021 includes both immediate and long-term initiatives to support the residential energy efficiency sector in the face of sustained challenges stemming from the pandemic. Through the establishment of grants for online workforce training, residential contractors will immediately gain access to online training designed to prepare them to conduct comprehensive home energy efficiency retrofits. These grants will allow contracting businesses to re-hire and re-invest in their employees despite continued economic recession. The Home Energy Savings Retrofit Rebate Program established under this bill would then act as a stimulus – encouraging homeowners to undertake energy retrofits of their homes and driving demand for these highly trained workers. This will create local jobs than cannot be outsourced and spur massive upgrades to this nation’s residential housing stock.

**How It Works:**

<b>HOPE Contractor Training</b>	<b>HOMES Rebate Program</b>	<b>Job Creation</b>
<p>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. The online training qualification is designed to serve as a pathway to participate in the HOMES rebate program. 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.</p>	<p>HOPE would be paired with a \$8.4 billion Home Energy Savings Retrofit Rebate Program to be authorized through 2027 that would create incentives for homeowners 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 States to advance the efficiency, health, and safety of residences. Higher incentives would be available for income qualified households, to help those most in need. Additional incentives were added to support multi-family residential retrofits as well as advance equity and data considerations.</p>	<p>Contracting jobs are inherently local, and most residential contracting companies are small businesses with fewer than 10 employees. HOPE for HOMES will spur the creation of a highly trained local contractor workforce that cannot be outsourced. It will also generate jobs up the supply chain in manufacturing, distribution, and retail sales of energy efficient technologies and products. A 2020 ACEEE analysis of the smaller-scaled bill in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress estimated it would support 42,000 annual jobs (job-years) over the next few years.</p>

**Members Cosponsoring the Bill:**

**SENATE BILL**

Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)  
Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)  
Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE)

**HOUSE BILL**

Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT)  
Rep. David McKinley (R-WV)

**Organizations Who Support the 2021 Bill:**

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  
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