

TESTIMONY OF DAVID TERRY, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE ENERGY OFFICIALS, BEFORE THE U.S. HOUSE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF FY'27 U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY FUNDING

April 24, 2026

Chair Simpson, Ranking Member Pingree, and members of the Subcommittee, I am David Terry, President of the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), which represents the 56 State and Territory Energy Directors and their Offices. NASEO submits this testimony in support of funding for the ENERGY STAR program at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). While we acknowledge that the preliminary agreement between EPA and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to transfer operation of the full ENERGY STAR program to DOE, we are deeply concerned that no budget has been requested at either EPA or DOE and that the subcommittee's bill text from the FY'26 bill has been ignored. NASEO supports funding of at least **\$36 million in FY'27, including specific bill text directing that the funds be utilized only for the ENERGY STAR program. The program received \$54 million a decade ago and is now down to approximately \$33 million.** The ENERGY STAR program is successful, voluntary, and cost-effective. A critical part of ENERGY STAR's value to the states and private sector is the oversight and operation by a federal agency that ensures no one commercial interest is favored. The program has a proven track record – it makes sense, it saves energy and money, and Americans embrace it. ENERGY STAR helps consumers and businesses control expenditures over the long term. The program is strongly supported by product manufacturers, utilities, and homebuilders, and ENERGY STAR leverages the states' voluntary efficiency actions in every region of the nation. Voluntary ENERGY STAR activities are occurring in public buildings, such as schools, in conjunction with State Energy Offices, in virtually every state, including Idaho and Maine. The states and the public utilize ENERGY STAR because it is seen as unbiased and delivers cost-saving benefits to businesses, consumers and state and local governments. NASEO and the states are concerned that a gap in fully-funding expert, private-sector contractor support to help implement the program will continue for another year which will further damage the program and diminish business and consumer energy cost-saving benefits. In addition, the product updates are well behind and a further delay will damage the efficacy of this voluntary program.

The ENERGY STAR program is focused on voluntary efforts that reduce energy waste, promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy, and works with states, local governments, communities and business to achieve these goals in a cooperative, public-private manner. NASEO has worked closely with EPA and approximately 40 states are ENERGY STAR Partners. With very limited funding, EPA's ENERGY STAR program coordinates with the State Energy Offices to give consumers and businesses the opportunity and technical assistance tools to make better energy decisions and catalyzes product efficiency improvements by manufacturers without regulation or mandates. The program is voluntary.

ENERGY STAR focuses on energy-efficient products as well as buildings (e.g., residential, commercial, and industrial). Over 300 million ENERGY STAR qualified products

were sold in 2019 alone, not including another 300 million ENERGY STAR certified light bulbs. The ENERGY STAR label is recognized across the United States. Approximately 90 percent of households recognize the ENERGY STAR label and a majority of surveyed U.S. households reported having purchased an ENERGY STAR product. The manufacturing, installation, design, wholesale distribution, and provision of installation services related to ENERGY STAR products employed approximately 750,000 American workers (not including retail employment) in accordance with a 2023 DOE report. It makes the work of the State Energy Offices much easier, by engaging the public on easily-recognized products, services, and targets. In order to obtain the ENERGY STAR label, a product has to meet established guidelines. ENERGY STAR's voluntary partnership programs include ENERGY STAR Buildings, ENERGY STAR Homes, ENERGY STAR Small Business, and ENERGY STAR Labeled Products. We are also encouraged by the ENERGY STAR Home Upgrades Program.

Marketplace barriers are also eradicated through the ENERGY STAR program's collaborative approach to consumer education. State Energy Offices are working with EPA to promote ENERGY STAR products, ENERGY STAR for new construction (including in Maine), ENERGY STAR for public housing, etc. Another ENERGY STAR success is in the manufactured housing sector. Some states and utilities offer modest rebates for ENERGY STAR manufactured homes in order to deliver both energy cost savings to homeowners and lower overall electric grid operation costs for all customers.

In 2023, millions of consumers and thousands of voluntary partners, including manufacturers, builders, businesses, communities, and utilities, tapped the value of ENERGY STAR and achieved impressive financial and environmental results.

More than 840 utilities, state, and local governments and non-profits utilize ENERGY STAR in their energy efficiency programs, as do approximately 1,700 manufacturers.

The State Energy Offices are very encouraged by progress made in our states to promote programs to make schools more energy-efficient while improving indoor air quality and comfort. In fact, there are over 150 ENERGY STAR-rated schools in states. In addition, many states' private sector partners voluntarily utilize ENERGY STAR to promote energy efficiency and lower operating costs.

In the past, EPA has provided technical assistance to the State Energy Offices in such areas as ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (how to rate the performance of buildings), setting an energy target, and financing options for building improvements and building upgrade strategies. ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager is used extensively by State Energy Offices to benchmark performance of state and municipal buildings, saving taxpayer dollars. Portfolio Manager is the industry leading benchmarking tool which has been used voluntarily in approximately 50% of the commercial buildings in the United States. Portfolio Manager is used to measure, track, assess, and report energy and water consumption. Portfolio Manager has been updated and is now more helpful. Portfolio Manager is utilized by many states and 48 local governments.

Additionally, the industrial sector embraces ENERGY STAR at job-creating companies such as GM, Eastman Chemical, Nissan, Raytheon, and Boeing. Recent ENERGY STAR certified manufacturers include such companies as J.R. Simplot, Flowers Foods, Ardagh Glass, and Marathon Petroleum Refining. At the close of 2022, more than 750 U.S. industrial sites had committed to the ENERGY STAR Challenge for Industry

The State Energy Offices are working cooperatively with our peers in the state environmental agencies and state public utilities commissions to ensure that programs, regulations, projects and policies are developed recognizing both energy and environmental concerns. We have worked closely with this program at EPA to address these issues. We encourage these continued efforts.

Conclusion

The ENERGY STAR program saves consumers billions of dollars every year. The payback and job creation benefits are enormous. NASEO supports robust program funding of at least \$36 million in FY'27. Funding for the ENERGY STAR program is justified. It is a solid public-private relationship that leverages resources, time and talent to produce tangible results by saving energy and money. NASEO endorses ENERGY STAR as a constructive partnership that the State Energy Offices have with the private sector to cooperatively implement a variety of critical national programs without mandates.

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