

Written Testimony of Jason Hartke  
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U.S. House of Representatives  
Energy and Commerce Committee  
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change  
“Time for Action: Addressing the Environmental and Economic Effects of Climate Change.”  
February 6, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a written statement regarding the Environment & Climate Change Subcommittee’s Feb. 6 hearing titled, "Time for Action: Addressing the Environmental and Economic Effects of Climate Change." We are pleased that the Committee is taking a close look at the consequences of climate change and the actions that must be taken to address it. We look forward to working with you to develop and advance bipartisan climate policy in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress.

I write today to emphasize the powerful role that energy efficiency can play as a solution, and the bipartisan opportunity it represents. Energy efficiency is widely recognized as the single most effective strategy we have for reducing carbon emissions, with the [International Energy Agency reporting](#) that efficiency alone must account for more than 40 percent of the emissions reductions needed to meet global targets. At the same time, increased efficiency is an enormous economic opportunity, with tremendous untapped potential to create jobs and economic activity – particularly in the construction and manufacturing sectors – while strengthening U.S. productivity and competitiveness and saving Americans billions of dollars in energy costs.

Energy efficiency already is by far the largest sector in the clean energy industry, supporting [more than 2.25 million jobs](#) (out of a total of 3.1 million clean energy jobs). It is also among the fastest-growing, with employers anticipating nearly 10 percent annual growth. Seven in 10 of those jobs are in construction and manufacturing sectors. Encouraging efficiency will stimulate economic activity across the country and drive innovation and technology development that will help maintain U.S. leadership in an increasingly competitive global industry.

As you search for bipartisan solutions in the 116th Congress, we urge you to start with bipartisan policy encouraging energy efficiency, whether through infrastructure and transportation policy, tax incentives, public-private partnerships, R&D investments, or other policy areas. *Attached, please find a letter dated Jan. 8 signed by more than 40 companies and organizations also calling on Congress to prioritize efficiency.*

Opportunities for advancing energy efficiency exist across a broad range of policy areas, including:

- **Infrastructure:** Infrastructure is more than roads and bridges – it’s our utility grid, water and wastewater facilities, transit hubs, public buildings, ports, and other structures. These facilities use enormous amounts of energy, and a nationwide infrastructure initiative presents an opportunity to “get it right” and save consumers and taxpayers decades of

wasted energy costs. In some cases, infrastructure projects can pay for themselves through public-private partnerships and innovative financing of energy savings investments. Incorporating energy efficiency can also provide a host of additional benefits, such as improving power grid reliability and resilience by stabilizing demand and reducing emissions – all while creating good-paying jobs.

- **Transportation:** The U.S. transportation sector – which accounts for about one-third of U.S. energy consumption and carbon emissions – is on the verge of a major transformation that has enormous implications for energy use. New technologies and business models such as ride-sharing, electrification, autonomous vehicles, and data-driven public transportation are creating an opportunity to reinvent mobility for a smarter, more integrated system that uses energy more efficiently. This requires new policy and coordination. In 2017, the Alliance convened the 50x50 Commission on U.S. Transportation Sector Efficiency, including automakers, utilities, public interest groups, product manufacturers, and technology providers. With a goal of reducing transportation energy use by 50 percent by 2050, the Commission in September outlined a series of [recommendations](#) including expanding tax incentives for electric and other alternative-fuel vehicles, investing in charging infrastructure, maintaining strong fuel efficiency standards, investing in research, development and deployment to strengthen U.S. leadership, and improving coordination among different jurisdictions.
- **Built Environment:** Existing homes and buildings – and new ones under construction – will be in use for decades to come, with enormous implications for U.S. energy consumption. The built environment currently accounts for about 40 percent of our energy use, and as with the transportation sector, innovation and technology are creating new opportunities for savings in residential, commercial, and industrial applications that can play a significant role in decarbonizing the economy. In addition to encouraging traditional efficiency solutions such as improved building envelopes and equipment, there are tremendous policy opportunities to pave the way for highly efficient homes and buildings through systems-oriented practices and technologies such as integrated design, active-energy management, internet of things, grid integration, and artificial intelligence.
- **Tax Policy:** While the federal government encourages nearly every mainstream form of energy generation with tax incentives – and has done so for decades – there are currently no direct incentives for energy efficiency in the U.S. tax code. This is a glaring and costly omission. Opportunities for encouraging high-efficiency homes and buildings could lock in decades of energy and cost savings while stimulating construction activity. Likewise, long-term, meaningful incentives for high-efficiency air conditioning, water heaters, lighting systems, and other equipment are proven to stimulate markets, save consumers money, and sharply reduce emissions.
- **Federal Program Funding:** Federal investments in energy efficiency drive gains throughout the economy and stimulate billions of dollars in economic activity. Third-party, peer-reviewed studies show that total taxpayer investment of \$12 billion to date in R&D at the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy has yielded more than \$388 billion in net U.S. economic benefits. Public private

partnerships such as the ENERGY STAR and Better Plants/Better Buildings Initiative have delivered equally impressive results. For example, in addition to helping Americans save more than \$30 billion in 2016, ENERGY STAR saved 400 billion kWh of electricity, delivering carbon emission reductions of 320 million metric tons – or the equivalent of the entire energy use of nearly 35 million homes for one year.

The U.S. has come a long way in using energy more productively in recent decades, yet more than half of the energy we generate is still not put to use. The opportunities ahead are even greater than our past gains, and as a diverse coalition of businesses and organizations, we stand ready to work with you to continue U.S. leadership in this important field and advance efficiency across the economy.

### **About the Alliance to Save Energy**

Founded in 1977, the Alliance to Save Energy is a nonprofit, bipartisan alliance of business, government, environmental and consumer leaders working to expand the economy while using less energy. Our mission is to promote energy productivity worldwide – including through energy efficiency – to achieve a stronger economy, a cleaner environment and greater energy security, affordability and reliability.

Sincerely,

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