

July 16, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

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

Thank you for your continued leadership in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout. We write to urge you to take more aggressive and timely actions to support the 360,000 energy efficiency workers who, according to [analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data](#), have lost their jobs since March as a direct result of the virus.

The vast majority of these losses have come at small businesses – mostly contractors and construction firms doing insulation, building improvement and HVAC work – who have seen a sudden slowdown in projects due to safety concerns about people working in homes and buildings. For perspective, the 360,000 energy efficiency job losses are nearly twice [the entire coal industry workforce](#), roughly equivalent to the [combined wind and solar workforces](#), and more than three times the number of [oil and gas industry job losses](#) as a result of COVID.

Without federal support, we fear that many of these efficiency jobs will not return. The good news is there are a variety of policies that could be enacted quickly to encourage new economic activity that would put people back to work while also reducing energy costs and building a more sustainable future.

To that end, we urge you to consider the following in any future COVID relief or recovery package:

- With millions of unemployed Americans suddenly struggling to pay energy bills, significantly increased investments in weatherization assistance.
- With an urgent need to improve indoor environments at critical public facilities, immediate investments in public buildings, particularly in schools struggling to reopen but also public hospitals, community shelters, federal (or military) and other facilities. A [recent GAO report](#), for example found that 54 percent of schools in the U.S. need to upgrade multiple systems such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning and lighting. Alongside construction funding, we strongly recommend that for projects with energy savings, federal funding be leveraged with private financing to multiply jobs creation impact and increase the total investment. For example, \$1

billion in federal dollars will attract between \$4-14 billion in private sector investment maximizing both infrastructure improvements and employment.

- With a growing need to help Americans reduce their energy bills, modernized energy-efficiency tax incentives and/or rebates encouraging efficiency upgrades in homes and buildings.
- With home contractors in need of training and unable to enter homes, investment in online training and workforce development.
- Increased investments in the State Energy Program and grant funding to local communities to support efficiency projects, including for small businesses.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. We would appreciate any opportunity to discuss them further and look forward to any questions or comments you may have. For more information, please contact Ben Evans at bevans@ase.org.

Sincerely,

Advanced Energy Economy
Alliance to Save Energy
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy
ASHRAE
Building Performance Association
E4TheFuture
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
Federal Performance Contracting Coalition
Institute for Market Transformation
National Association of Energy Service Companies
National Association for State Community Services Programs
National Association of State Energy Officials
U.S. Green Building Council

CC:

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
The Honorable Joe Manchin, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr., Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
The Honorable Greg Walden, Ranking Member, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
The Honorable Chuck Grassley, Chairman, Senate Committee on Finance
The Honorable Ron Wyden, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Finance
The Honorable Richard Neal, Chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, House Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
The Honorable Marcy Kaptur, Chairwoman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development