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Written Testimony of
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Subcommittee Chair Latta, Chair Guthrie, Subcommittee Ranking Member Castor, Ranking Member Pallone, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and to participate in this important discussion examining affordability, choice and security in appliance and building policies. As you may know, the buildings sector is responsible for nearly 30% of all U.S. end-use energy consumption.[1] Unfortunately, a significant portion of this energy is wasted. By using our energy smarter and leveraging energy efficiency in buildings, we strengthen U.S. energy dominance, lower costs for families, businesses, and factories, and protect our national security. While I am happy to address all the issues before the committee today, I would like to focus my testimony on the buildings we all live in, residential buildings. Nine in ten American single-family detached homes are under-insulated.[2] Policies aimed at retrofitting the over 120 million homes and dwelling units across the country will not only help homeowners save money on their monthly utility bills, but will also improve household comfort, health, safety, and resiliency. Advancing energy efficiency in buildings across the U.S. reduces

[1] U.S. Energy Information Administration, Energy Consumption by sector, April 2024. https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=86&t=1.
[2] ICF, "Evaluation of Under Insulated Single-Family Detached Homes in the United States", October 2024. https://insulationinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Under-Insulated-Single-Family-Detached-Homes-in-the-United-States-Final-20241008.pdf.

demands on our energy system, while also driving local job growth among the small business contractors that I am proud to represent.

I serve as the Chief Policy Officer for the Building Performance Association (BPA). BPA is a membership-driven 501(c)(6) industry association dedicated to advancing the home and building performance industry by delivering improved energy efficiency, health, safety, and environmental performance of buildings and to advance policies, programs and standards through research, education, training and outreach. BPA's network of over 20,000 individuals includes home performance contractors who perform critical upgrades in all 50 U.S. states and Washington, DC. Contractors are the vital "boots on the ground" for energy efficiency - working locally in homes and buildings to reduce energy waste and support energy affordability and energy abundance. I appreciate the opportunity to represent BPA here today to share how energy efficiency isn't about "doing less" — it's about America doing more, better, and cheaper.

Energy Efficiency Equals Jobs

Last month, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) released its annual *United States Energy & Employment Report (USEER)*[3], a compilation of survey data taken annually from over 42,000 businesses nationwide that constitutes the most comprehensive study of energy related employment available. The 2025 USEER affirmed what past reports have repeatedly shown: the energy efficiency sector is the largest employer across the entire energy sector, employing nearly 2.4 million Americans, and more than twice as many workers as the entire U.S. fuels and electric generation industries combined.[4] Energy efficiency jobs also have the strongest momentum - the

[3] U.S. Department of Energy, 2025 United States Energy & Employment Report, August 2025, https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2025-08/National%20USEER_08282025.pdf. The USEER is completed in compliance with 42 U.S.C. § 18841(c)(2)(A).
[4] U.S. Department of Energy, 2025 United States Energy & Employment Report, August 2025, p.ii.

sector grew by more than 91,000 from 2023 to 2024,[5] the fastest of any energy job sector over the same period.[6]

Energy efficiency jobs comprise anyone participating in the energy efficiency supply chain, including designers and developers, manufacturers and distributors, and contractors working on new construction or repair projects.[7] These workers are everywhere – 99.9% of U.S. counties have energy efficiency jobs and nearly 270,000 Americans in rural areas work in energy efficiency.[8] Of the more than 390,000 energy efficiency establishments, 75% of them have fewer than 20 employees and are classified as small businesses.[9] These jobs, particularly for contractors and repair technicians, are inherently local and cannot be exported.

Efficiency jobs also pay relatively well - the median wage of an energy efficiency worker is $59,390, 20% higher than the national median wage of $49,500.[10] A significant portion of U.S. energy efficiency jobs are in the residential sector, and approximately 54% of energy efficiency jobs involve construction and repairs.[11] These contractors reduce energy waste in U.S. homes and buildings across the country.

Using data from the USEER, BPA releases an annual *Energy Efficiency Jobs in America* Report featuring additional information, including Congressional district-level energy efficiency employment data.[12] BPA will release the 2025 edition of the *Energy Efficiency Jobs in America* report this fall.

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[5] Ibid; U.S. Department of Energy, 2024 United States Energy & Employment Report, October 2024, https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/USEER%202024_COMPLETE_1002.pdf, p.165.
[6] Ibid; Ibid, p.xii-xv.
[7] U.S. Department of Energy, 2025 United States Energy & Employment Report Appendix, August 2025, p. A-93-95. https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2025-08/USEER%20Appendices%200828%202.0.pdf.
[8] E4TheFuture, Energy Efficiency Jobs in America, December 2024, https://building-performance.org/documents/Energy-Efficiency-Jobs-in-America-2024.pdf, p.3.
[9] E4TheFuture, Energy Efficiency Jobs in America, December 2024, p.4.
[10] U.S. Department of Energy, 2025 United States Energy & Employment Report, August 2025, p.ii.
[11] Ibid, p.126.
[12] Building Performance Association, "Energy Efficiency Jobs in America." https://building-performance.org/2024-energy-efficiency-jobs-in-america-report/.

The energy efficiency industry still has room to grow its workforce. Per the 2025 USEER, 88% of energy efficiency employers performing construction work reported at least some difficulty finding qualified workers - and almost half (48%) reported hiring as "very difficult".[13] Qualified often means trained – and training is essential to energy efficiency upgrades to make sure that HVAC equipment is properly sized and correctly installed for example. This training is not just an energy efficiency issue, it is also a health and safety issue.

Building Codes are Critical to America's Future Infrastructure

A home built today is an existing home tomorrow and possibly part of our housing infrastructure for a century. If it is not built with adequate insulation and air sealing, efficient duct work, heating and cooling systems, and insulated windows, homeowners will be hard-pressed to spend the time and money to upgrade their home at a cost significantly more than building the home efficiently in the first place.

Building codes are important to ensuring all future homeowners have lower energy bills. Investing an additional $7,229 upfront for energy efficiency improvements to meet the 2021 IECC rather than the 2009 IECC leads to an average annual cost savings of $963, or over $80 per month on utility bills.[14]

Building codes and standards play an important role in ensuring that Americans live and work in safe, comfortable, and affordable homes. Model building energy codes are developed

[13] U.S. Department of Energy, 2025 United States Energy & Employment Report, August 2025, p.133.
[14] Final Determination: Adoption of Energy Efficiency Standards for New Construction of HUD- and USDA-Financed Housing, A Notice by the Housing and Urban Development Department and the Agriculture Department on 04/26/2024.
https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/26/2024-08793/final-determination-adoption-of-energy-efficiency-standards-for-new-construction-of-hud--and

through a collaborative process involving the building industry and other stakeholders. State and local jurisdictions are then able to adopt or tailor the model codes to meet their local needs (the model codes are also tailored for eight different climate zones). The national model energy codes are also flexible, offering builders and contractors multiple pathways to compliance so that they can choose the solutions that work best for their local markets and their individual buildings.

In addition to supporting an important part of America's energy infrastructure, building codes save lives. According to a November 2020 study by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), "over a 20-year period, cities and counties with modern building codes would avoid at least $32 billion in losses from natural disasters, when compared to jurisdictions without modern building codes."[15]

Codes and Standards Protect Consumers and Renters

According to the 2023 census, 35% of Americans live in rental properties.[16] In single-family homes and multi-family properties with individual meters, the tenant usually pays the electric and fuel bills, while the landlord pays for the upkeep of the property. Because the landlord does not receive the benefit of the energy savings from the utility bills when replacing a refrigerator or HVAC unit, or for placing more insulation in the attic to maintain home temperatures, they have no incentive to invest in more efficient equipment. Building energy codes and appliance and equipment standards provide the minimum efficiency baseline to protect consumers. And while the demographics of homeowners vary greatly among states and cities, in

[15] "Building Codes Save: A Nationwide Study Losses Avoided as a Result of Adopting Hazard-Resistant Building," U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, November 2020, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_rsl_building-codes-save-study_042025.pdf

[16] U.S. Census Bureau, "Demographic Characteristics for occupied Housing Units," American Community Survey, 2023, https://data.census.gov/table?q=total+number+of+renters&y=2023

2023, homes built to a strong energy code and common-sense appliance standards ensure everyday, hardworking Americans can pay their utility bills. In fact, according to the Department of Energy, in 2024, "a typical household saved about $576 per year off their energy and water bill as a result of appliance and equipment standards".[17]

Energy Efficiency Supports Energy Dominance

A 2022 study by ACEEE, the Alliance to Save Energy, and the Business Council for Sustainable Energy documented that energy efficiency is America's most abundant energy resource. While we continue to see rising energy consumption, without the gains in energy efficiency made since 1980, the 2023 U.S. economy would likely have required two-thirds more energy.[18]

In our discussion today about buildings and appliances, it is critical that we acknowledge that energy efficiency policy has been a part of the solution to our past energy challenges – allowing American industry, and the economy generally, to grow faster than energy consumption, thus saving money for needs other than energy. By investing in energy efficiency, we have built buildings and appliances that save more, do more, go faster, and last longer while using less energy. And we need to continue to do this if we are to mitigate electricity price increases due to new data centers and manufacturing plants.

[17] Fact Sheet on Appliance and Equipment Standards Program, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, March 2025, https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/Appliance%20Standards%20Fact%20Sheet-02.pdf

[18] Alliance to Save Energy, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, and Business Council for Sustainable Energy, Energy Efficiency Impact Report, 2022, https://energyefficiencyimpact.org/.

While data centers accounted for roughly 4.4% of total U.S. electricity use as of 2023, this figure is projected to rise to between 6.7 and 12% in the next three years[19] and this could greatly impact the cost of energy. A recent study conducted by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission estimated that without policy change, residential customers could see their bills increase by hundreds of dollars a year by 2040 due to spillover effects from data center expansion within the state.[20] Others estimate that the price of electricity in data center hot spots may continue to rise - retail rates in those areas could rise 15% to 40% as soon as 2030.[21]

Capital investments in electric infrastructure were the primary driver of cost increases from 2023-2024;[22] these capital improvements lead to increased utility bills. But if American homes are allowed to invest in dynamic efficiency improvements and load shifting, we can simultaneously turn down unnecessary power demands for a brief period and save consumers billions of dollars because utilities would not be buying power at "surge" prices and because we could mitigate long-term distribution system costs.

Most households in America have a "smart meter" that measures energy usage every 15 or 60 minutes. If a building reduces energy demand to help stabilize grid constraints, the "smart meter" provides the receipt of this reduction, enabling individuals to be paid for their share of the

[19] DOE Releases New Report Evaluating Increase in Electricity Demand from Data Centers, *U.S. Department of Energy,* December 20, 2024. https://www.energy.gov/articles/doe-releases-new-report-evaluating-increase-electricity-demand-data-centers

[20] Commonwealth of Virginia, Data Centers in Virginia, December 2024, https://jlarc.virginia.gov/pdfs/reports/Rpt598.pdf, p.v.

[21] Batra, Lalit, Harris, Deb, et. al, Rising current: America's growing electricity demand, ICF, May 2025, https://www.icf.com/-/media/files/icf/reports/2025/energy-demand-report-icf-2025_report.pdf?rev=c87f111ab97f481a8fe3d3148a372f7f, p.3.

[22] "Grid infrastructure investments drive increase in utility spending over last two decades," U.S. Energy Information Administration, November 18, 2024, https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=63724

overall reduction and their role in supporting grid reliability. If you save more energy during "surge" hours, you earn more money - but only if the smart meter data is available.

Fifteen years ago, Congress allocated over $3 billion for the installation of smart meters nationwide; today, over 85% of households have a smart meter, but we are not fully using these capabilities we've already paid for. According to Mission:data Coalition, over 75% of Americans do not have the ability to share their smart meter data electronically.[23] In fact, only 14% of utilities receiving federal funds provide a way for customers to share their historical smart meter data, a prerequisite for mitigating billions of dollars in distribution system spending over the next five years.[24] Helping customers easily share their smart meter data with firms who are trying to save them money will help mitigate rising costs in the power sector.

To ensure that America's electric grid can support new data centers and advanced manufacturing facilities, we will need to deploy energy efficiency upgrades and flexible demand resources at an even faster pace than in the past. Efficiency upgrades, paired with devices like smart thermostats and water heaters, can unlock significant reductions in peak demand that will allow utilities to connect new data centers to the grid without raising costs for ratepayers. Given multi-year timelines for permitting of new power plants and transmission, energy efficiency and flexible demand are the only solutions that can match the rapid pace of data center deployment. The first Trump Administration recognized the potential benefits of deploying these technologies at scale, and launched the Grid-Interactive Efficient Buildings (GEBs) initiative in 2018. Contractors are excited about these technologies as well, as they can reduce costs through virtual troubleshooting and optimization and unlock new revenue streams for homeowners.

[23] Mission:data, Green Button Explorer, https://explorer.missiondata.io/
[24] Mission:data, "DEACTIVATED / How Electric Utilities Turned Off the Data-Sharing Features of 14 Million Smart Meters" ,, September, 2022, https://www.missiondata.io/reports

Energy Efficiency Supports Energy Affordability and Consumer Choice

Our nation's housing stock is aging, with roughly 60 percent of homes built before 1980.[25] Many homes were built before modern energy codes, with limited insulation and old, inefficient appliances leading to unnecessarily high utility bills for many Americans. According to the Energy Information Administration, 33.58 million American households are energy insecure[26] with nearly 25 million households reducing or forgoing food or medicine to pay energy costs, and 12.20 million households setting thermostats at an unhealthy temperature to reduce energy bills. Almost five million homes reported being unable to use heating equipment, while 6.35 million reported being unable to use cooling equipment.[27] Depending on the weather, this could have disastrous outcomes.

By improving the energy efficiency of homes and buildings, families and property owners save money, month after month, year after year. DOE estimated that while the average household spends $2,000 on their annual utility bills, between $200-$400 of this is going to waste from drafts, air leaks, and outdated heating and cooling systems.[28] This is why energy efficiency is so critical to energy affordability. According to ACEEE, using 2023 energy prices, energy efficiency saves Americans approximately $1.4 billion annually.[29] And upgrading the energy efficiency of homes for those living on the edge of poverty is critical to lowering bills.

[25] National Association of Home Builders, "Eye on Housing," 2024. https://eyeonhousing.org/2024/02/the-age-of-the-u-s-housing-stock/#_ftn1
[26] US Energy Information Administration, "Residential Energy Consumption Survey," 2020. https://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/data/2020/hc/pdf/HC%2011.1.pdf
[27] Ibid.
[28] "Why Energy Efficiency Matters," *U.S. Department of Energy,* https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/why-energy-efficiency-matters.
[29] American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), Energy Efficiency Impact Report, 2022, https://energyefficiencyimpact.org; ACEEE, Energy Efficiency Impact Report update (unpublished), September 2025.

With lower energy bills, families can increase their usable income for other essentials like food, clothing, medicine, and health care.

Energy efficiency also creates healthier, more comfortable homes. Home performance upgrades not only reduce energy bills but also help resolve drafty rooms and avoid indoor air quality issues such as mold and moisture that exacerbate asthma and other health concerns. These health benefits are yet another reason our contractors are proud to work in this industry, helping families feel comfortable and safe in their homes while also lowering their energy bills. A recent National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) survey affirmed that homebuyers deeply value these benefits - according to NAHB, a majority of prospective homebuyers rated energy-efficient features, such as efficient windows (83%) and above-code insulation (72%), as essential or desirable.[30]

Weatherization Assistance Program Supports Affordability

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) has focused on helping reduce the energy burden to low-income Americans for almost 50 years. According to the Department of Energy's Office of State and Community Energy Programs, more than 7 million low-income and rural households have received WAP services through state and local agencies, an average of 35,000 homes weatherized each year.[31] WAP brings energy efficiency to the communities that need it most by serving low-income households particularly susceptible to volatile energy prices

[30] "What Home Buyers Really Want - 2024 Edition," National Association of Home Builders, accessed under "Green Features Rated Essential or Desirable," https://www.nahb.org/blog/2025/06/epa-nahb-meeting.
[31] *Weatherization Assistance Program*, Department of Energy, Office of State and Community Energy Programs, https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2023-WAP-Fact-Sheet.pdf.

and higher utility bills. Furthermore, this work supports 8,500 highly skilled jobs with competitive salaries,[32] jobs that are local to each community and cannot be outsourced.

Weatherization's impact extends far beyond the number of homes reached and jobs supported. It can make a life-changing difference in the health and safety of our most vulnerable neighbors, including senior citizens and low-income families. For every $1 spent on energy and health benefits, weatherization produces a 350 percent return on that investment; households served by the program save an average of $372 annually.[33] Those living with asthma or other mold-borne illnesses spend less time in the emergency room and have seen their medical bills decrease by an average of $514 per year.[34]

Each home participating in WAP receives a site-specific suite of energy efficiency measures to be installed, such as insulation, air sealing, and high efficiency HVAC systems. DOE requires that the suite of measures installed in each home has a Savings to Investment Ratio of 1.0 or greater to ensure the program delivers cost-effective services to eligible households. DOE evaluations have found each dollar that goes to weatherization assistance also yields at least $2.78 in non-energy benefits to the home and society.[35] Additionally, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory found that the total health and household-related benefits for each unit is estimated to be $14,148.[36] By retrofitting homes in need of repair, weatherization also supports a

[32] Ibid.
[33] *Weatherization Assistance Program: Driving Energy Efficiency and Security*, NASCSP, https://nascsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/250212-Energy-Awareness-Flyer.pdf.
[34] Tonn, Bruce, et. al. "Health and Household-Related Benefits Attributable to the Weatherization Assistance Program." Oak Ridge National Laboratory. September 2014. https://nascsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/ORNL_TM-2014_345.pdf
[35] Department of Energy, "Weatherization Assistance Program Fact Sheet", 2021. https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2021/01/f82/WAP-fact-sheet_2021_0.pdf
[36] Oak Ridge National Lab, "Weatherization Works - Summary of Findings from the Retrospective Evaluation of the U.S. Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program", 2014. https://weatherization.ornl.gov/wp-content/uploads/pdf/WAPRetroEvalFinalReports/ORNL_TM-2014_338.pdf

more affordable housing stock and makes homes more resilient during extreme weather events and disasters.

WAP projects yield benefits for households both immediately and for years to come. In Butler County, KY, one WAP program participant (an elderly widow) saw her winter heating bills fall from $253 a month to $150 a month after she received weatherization services - all while making her home warmer and more comfortable. In Columbus, OH, one family saw their utility bills fall from $341 per month to $130 per month after WAP - a 60% reduction.[37] In Athens, GA, a family receiving WAP services saw their monthly electric bill reduced from $210 to less than $70, their gas bill reduced from $120 to $70 per month, and their water bills decreased from $170 to less than $60 per month. The upgrades also improved the comfort of the home for the family, which they could feel immediately.[38]

Bipartisan WAP Reauthorization Legislation

The bipartisan Energy Act of 2020, signed by President Trump, authorized WAP through Fiscal Year 2025. In the face of rising energy prices, it is critical to reauthorize WAP and ensure that these energy saving upgrades continue to flow directly to the low-income households who need them most. H.R. 1355, the Weatherization Enhancement and Readiness Act of 2025, introduced by Reps. Tonko (D-NY-20), Lawler (R-NY-17), Kaptur (D-OH-09), Riley (D-NY-19) and Del. Moylan (R-GU-AL), would reauthorize and update the WAP program to ensure the continued support for these households.

[37] U.S. DOE, "Weatherization Saves 60% on Client Energy Bills in Ohio," https://www.energy.gov/scep/wap/articles/weatherization-saves-60-client-energy-bills-ohio.
[38] U.S. DOE, "Weatherization Reduces Energy and Water Bills for Georgia Client," https://www.energy.gov/scep/wap/articles/weatherization-reduces-energy-and-water-bills-georgia-client.

H.R. 1355 would reauthorize WAP at existing levels through 2030. The legislation would also authorize the vital Weatherization Readiness Fund, first funded by Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations, to give state programs the flexibility to reach more low-income homeowners currently ineligible for funding under WAP due to their homes' structural, electrical, or health-related issues. Additionally, the legislation would increase the statutory Average Cost Per Unit limit, allowing state programs to keep up with rising costs of building materials, equipment, and wages while also supporting more improvements per project for maximum energy savings.

Energy efficiency is, by its nature, fuel neutral – no matter the fuel, do more with less. Efficient technologies and building materials can be used to cut energy waste, no matter the fuel type. BPA member contractors working with households across the country value this versatility: it supports consumer choice, offering households a variety of efficient equipment options to best meet their needs, particularly based on energy prices and weather in their region.

Federal Energy Efficiency Programs are Vital to Jobs, Affordability and Energy Abundance

Energy efficiency programs, operated by the U.S. Department of Energy, provide cost relief to households, support American-based industry and jobs, ease strain on the energy grid, and reduce reliance on foreign energy. In addition to WAP, there are other key programs I want to recognize – the Building Technologies Office (BTO) and Residential Building's Integration (RBI)– that are leveraged through public-private partnerships and have helped modernize the nation's energy efficiency sector. These DOE programs, and others, deploy energy efficiency to deliver direct cost savings to homeowners, consumers, and businesses.

DOE energy efficiency programs enjoy strong support across the board: a recent letter in support of WAP led by the Alliance to Save Energy received over 70 signatures from groups and companies including the American Gas Association (AGA) and Duke Energy.[39] BPA's own stakeholder support letter in support of WAP and RBI received nearly 750 signatures from contractors, organizations, and stakeholders across all 50 states, including 220 home performance contractor owners and energy efficiency companies.[40]

Building Technologies Office and Residential Buildings Integration

The Building Technologies Office (BTO) hosts a variety of programs that research and field test technologies that improve building performance, expand consumer choice, and support affordability. BTO is driven by energy savings potential across a wide range of technologies.

Programs within BTO like the Residential Buildings Integration (RBI) program return benefits and savings to American households and consumers many times greater than the public's investment. Through RBI, DOE collaborates with the residential building industry to improve the energy efficiency of both new and existing homes across the country. Just a few examples of the crucial residential initiatives within RBI include the Buildings Upgrade Prize, a competitive award program open to municipalities and nonprofits aimed at supporting innovative building retrofits and improving energy affordability; Building America, which works with industry stakeholders and DOE national labs to conduct research to advance and deploy innovative technologies and construction practices for building energy efficiency; and HPXML, which helps simplify the methodology for collecting and transferring energy data.

[39] Alliance to Save Energy, "Support Adequate Funding for the Department of Energy Weatherization Assistance Program and State Energy Program", August 29, 2025. https://www.ase.org/sites/ase.org/files/final_sep-wap_fy26_appropriations_support_letter_08.29.25.pdf.

[40] Building Performance Association, "Small Business and Stakeholder Letter of Support for Strong FY26 DOE Energy Efficiency Program Funding". April 29, 2025. https://building-performance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/FY26-Small-Business-Stakeholder-Energy-Efficiency-Support-Letter.pdf.

More specifically, RBI's Buildings Upgrade Prize helps communities suffering from high energy costs plan, pilot, and execute building retrofits to reduce energy use, increase resiliency, unlock private investment, and drive economic growth. Rather than fully funding upgrades, Buildings Upgrade Prizes empower localities and community-based nonprofits to craft a roadmap to unlock efficiency upgrades, upgrade aging buildings, and develop local workforces. For example, the Louisville-Jefferson County, Kentucky, metropolitan area is home to upwards of 1.1 million people and represents the largest metropolitan area in Kentucky. The city's Buildings Upgrade Prize project seeks to eliminate severe energy burdens for low-income households and offer supplemental support for building benchmarking, financing, and workforce development while partnering with local nonprofits.[41]

BPA recently released a paper[42] on these unique prize recipients as over one third of awards were granted to communities that had not recently applied for federal funding, assuring that more Americans - particularly in rural areas - can benefit from federal support. In addition to this geographic diversity, all buildings - including churches, schools, single-family homes, commercial buildings, and manufactured homes - are eligible for participation in community plans. Over 300 applicants from 45 states submitted concept papers for Phase 1 of the Buildings Upgrade Prize, but due to limitations in available funding, only 45 teams were awarded initial funds and able to progress to project planning. These awardees plan to leverage future prize funding to build out detailed plans and project pilots to bring their innovative visions for local energy efficiency, resiliency, and economic development into action. Continued support for DOE

[41] "*Residential Energy Efficiency Retrofit Projects That Create Jobs: Insights from the Buildings Upgrade Prize,"* Building Performance Association report, July 2025, p. 2. https://building-performance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Buildings-Upgrade-Prize-Insights-to-Residential-Energy-Efficiency-Retrofit-Projects-Whitepaper-Final-v2-7.17.25.pdf
[42] Ibid.p.5

energy efficiency programs like the Buildings Upgrade Prize can ensure that more communities can embrace energy efficiency to cut energy bills.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Subcommittee Chair Latta, Chair Guthrie, Subcommittee Ranking Member Castor, Ranking Member Pallone, and esteemed members of the subcommittee, I ask you to consider the buildings you live and work in as a part of the solution to the energy affordability crisis we are discussing today. Despite the incredible strides in energy efficiency, buildings, including the appliances and equipment in them, are among the largest consumers of energy with some of the greatest opportunities to support dynamic change. This energy demand can be modified to support the grid when needed and is a critical part of the solution to our grid constraint concerns. With policy and program innovation that brings all of these pieces together to optimize energy usage, we can reduce some of the need for new power plants and deliver more reliable and affordable energy - all while making buildings healthier, more affordable and more comfortable places to live and work.