The Honorable John Kennedy
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

May XX, 2025

RE: Letter of Support for DOE's Building Technologies Office

Dear Chairman Kennedy, Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Murray, and Ranking Member Kaptur,

We, the undersigned, write to voice our support for the important programs within the Department of Energy (DOE)'s Building Technologies Office (BTO). BTO operates vital programs that reduce energy waste and boost energy affordability in our nation's 120 million homes and 6 million commercial buildings.

U.S. DOE energy efficiency programs, including those contained in the Building Technologies Office, provide exceptional value to American consumers and businesses, yielding benefits that far outweigh the relatively nominal outlays appropriated by Congress. According to various impact evaluation studies, DOE's innovation investments have had a benefit-to-cost ratio of 45 to 1 and generated $624 billion in net economic benefits for the country.[1]

Energy efficiency equals savings. Efficiency is a key domestic energy resource critical to delivering safe, reliable, and affordable energy to Americans now and in the future. Efficiency measures have helped cut our energy use in half relative to the size of the U.S. economy since 1980. This energy waste reduction has effectively delivered more than $2,000 in annual savings per American. According to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, scaling up key energy efficiency-related policies and programs can slash U.S. energy use by about 50% by 2050, savings that would amount to more than $700 billion in 2050.[2]

Energy efficiency equals innovation. Modernizing buildings is critical to improve the resiliency of the electrical grid. In 2024, buildings accounted for 37% of the nation's total energy consumption[3] and nearly

[1] Dowd, J. 2024. Summary of Seven Economic Return-on-Investment Impact Evaluation Studies across Five Offices within the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. EERE. Available at: https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/eere-iso-roi-report-2024.pdf

[2] Nadel, S., and L. Ungar. 2019. Halfway There: Energy Efficiency Can Cut Energy Use and Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Half by 2050. ACEEE. Available at: https://www.aceee.org/research-report/u1907.

[3] Energy Information Administration. April 2025. Monthly Energy Review. EIA. Available at: https://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/pdf/mer.pdf, see also Table 2.1a. Energy Consumption: Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Sectors. Available at: https://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/pdf/sec2_4.pdf

75% of its electricity use.[4] Furthermore, buildings consume up to 80% of peak electricity supplied by the bulk power system—typically the most expensive and dirty generation available.[5] Grid-integrated efficient buildings (GEBs) studied by BTO represent an opportunity to flex the timing and quantity of energy demand, ultimately providing headroom to the power system.

Energy efficiency also equals jobs. **American jobs that lower energy costs for Americans.** According to the 2024 *Energy Efficiency Jobs in America* report released by the Building Performance Association and E4TheFuture, the energy efficiency sector employs nearly 2.3 million Americans – more than 40 percent of all U.S. energy sector jobs.[6] Energy efficiency occupations run the gamut from manufacturing, distribution, installation, repair, and maintenance jobs that reduce energy consumption in homes and buildings. Local, family-sustaining EE construction jobs exist all across the country. In fact, 99.9% of U.S. counties host energy efficiency jobs, and more than 269,000 of these jobs are in rural areas.[7]

Although energy efficiency supports millions of local, unexportable jobs across the country, the industry currently faces acute workforce shortages. According to the 2024 U.S. Energy and Employment Report (USEER), 86% of respondents working in construction-related energy efficiency jobs indicated it was "very difficult" or "somewhat difficult" to find employees.[8]

Through its five critical program areas, BTO has cultivated partnerships with the many stakeholders working in the energy efficiency sector. These relationships with small businesses, manufacturers, utilities, energy professionals, nonprofits and industry trade associations, equipment and systems suppliers, and many others accelerate the adoption of high-performance building technologies—improving the comfort, affordability, and energy performance of our buildings, while increasing the reliability and resilience of the nation's grid.[9]

Residential Buildings Integration (RBI): RBI collaborates with the residential building industry to improve the energy efficiency of both new and existing homes. RBI develops critical technologies, tools, and solutions that help U.S. consumers and businesses achieve peak efficiency performance in residential buildings across the country. RBI supports workforce development and training in partnership with thousands of small businesses across the construction trades, smart grid technology and systems suppliers, and state and local governments. RBI should continue to support the residential workforce, including by enabling non-profit and industry trade associations to administer nationwide training coordination, promoting recruitment and retention, and researching program efficiencies for workforce expansion in residential energy efficiency. The critical integration research, demonstration, and market transformation activities of RBI drive energy affordability and cut utility bills for all Americans.

Commercial Buildings Integration (CBI): CBI's research, development, and evaluation advances a range of innovative building technologies and solutions to reduce energy costs and improve grid reliability. CBI works with commercial building owners, operators, and industry stakeholders to implement grid-integrated efficiency solutions that reduce or shift energy consumption in both new and existing commercial buildings. CBI supports demonstration projects and energy modeling tools that help drive adoption of high-performance technologies, including advanced insulation and air barrier systems,

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[4] Bouza, A. 2019. Building Technologies Office Overview. BTO. Available at: https://www.gsa.gov/system/files/Bouza%20-%209-12-19%20BTO%20overview.pdf

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Building Performance Association and E4TheFuture. December 2024. Energy Efficiency Jobs in America. Available at: https://building-performance.org/documents/Energy-Efficiency-Jobs-in-America-2024.pdf.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] U.S. Department of Energy. 2024 U.S. Energy and Employment Report. Available at: https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2024- 10/USEER%202024_COMPLETE_1002.pdf.

[9] U.S. Department of Energy. 2024. What Did the Building Technologies Office Accomplish This Year? Available at: https://www.energy.gov/eere/buildings/what-did-building-technologies-office-accomplish-year#fostered

across diverse commercial sectors. CBI should continue to support innovative public-private partnerships including the Better Buildings Initiative, which has effectively collaborated with over a quarter of the Fortune 100 companies and nearly 100 state and local governments, achieving nearly $22 billion in energy savings since 2011. By helping scale proven technologies and practices, CBI plays a critical role in increasing grid reliability and affordability by reducing peak load demand and increasing flexibility of demand, as well as cutting operational costs for businesses nationwide.

Emerging Technologies (ET): BTO funding and technical assistance help de-risk innovations, improve product performance, and enable faster market adoption—supporting manufacturers and small businesses working to meet higher energy standards. ET should continue this work to ensure the United States remains a global leader in energy-efficient building technologies, contributing to national energy goals while creating jobs in manufacturing and construction. As we reshore manufacturing, it is critical to back R&D programs like ET that directly increase energy affordability, security, and reliability, and improve U.S. competitiveness with China.

Efficiency Standards, Building Codes, and Test Procedures: Building energy codes are local codes. The Federal role in building energy codes is very limited but very critical. DOE supports development of model codes through research, technical analysis, and support of industry processes, and encourages adoption and implementation by States and local governments. BTO provides analysis, software tools, education and training platforms, and direct technical support for codes officials and building trades professionals. Modern building energy codes serve as the foundation for energy-efficient construction and renovation. Modern codes save 30% more energy compared to those of less than a decade ago, translating to more than $60 billion in energy cost savings for businesses and households.[10] The Building Energy Codes Program should continue efforts to ensure fair, consistent evaluation of products like insulation and air sealing materials, encouraging innovation and quality while delivering measurable energy savings. Advancing modern building energy codes is one of the most cost-effective ways to lock in energy savings, reduce emissions, and improve building resilience. BTO's support for state and local code adoption, compliance training, and enforcement is essential to maximizing the benefits of advanced building products. DOE is statutorily obligated to set minimum energy efficiency standards for appliances, equipment, and lighting. The Appliance and Equipment Standards Program should continue to ensure that new models make progress on efficiency as technology matures, and that test procedures reflect product improvements. The Department risks falling behind legal deadlines due to delays and inadequate staffing.

We strongly support the activities of the Building Technologies Office and ask that the office receive adequate funding and oversight to continue its vital work improving energy affordability. It is concerning that the Department has seen staff reductions of more than XX% since January 2025. The institutional knowledge and expertise of these professionals is critical to the integrity of the Department.

Sincerely,
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[10] U.S. Department of Energy. Saving Energy and Money with Building Energy Codes in the United States. Available at: https://www.energy.gov/eere/buildings/saving-energy-and-money-building-energy-codes-united-states