

# SUPPORT THE BUILDING STAR ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACT OF 2010 (S. 3079)

## **Position:**

NECA urges Congress to pass the “Building Star Energy Efficiency Act of 2010,” (S. 3079). Building STAR is a fast-acting, short-term program of rebates and tax incentives that will create hundreds of thousands of jobs through retrofitting commercial, institutional, and multi-family buildings.

## **Issue:**

NECA supports legislation that includes rebates for building owners who retrofit or implement energy-efficient building equipment, materials, products and services during 2010 and 2011. In many cases, rebates are much more immediate than tax incentives in that the building owners don’t have to wait until the following year when they file their taxes.

NECA supports additional legislation that would increase the Energy Efficiency Commercial Building Tax Deduction from \$1.80 to \$3.00 per square foot. The building deduction would also drive significant retrofit activity. The increase in the commercial building tax deduction is included in the Expanding Building Efficiency Incentives Act of 2009 (S. 1637 and H.R. 4226).

## **Status:**

**Senate:** Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced the “Building Star Energy Efficiency Act of 2010” or S.3079 on March 4, 2010 with six co-sponsors. Subsequently, a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing was held on March 11, 2010 to review the Building Star legislation.

## **Key Points:**

- Today, 1 in 5 construction workers – over 1.7 million people – are out of work and this figure is a national average with many localities experiencing one-half of their workforce unemployed.
- In addition to finding jobs for construction workers, NECA contractors capable of performing these retrofits would be able to put idle equipment, materials, and design capacity which could be quickly deployed to meet the demand generated by Building STAR rebates.
- The Building STAR legislation includes products installed and serviced by NECA contractors, including but not limited to, variable speed drives for motors; interior and exterior lighting; building energy audits and energy management and monitoring systems. Though estimates vary, Building STAR targets the commercial marketplace which account for 46% of building energy use.
- Investment in energy efficiency can make buildings healthier and more environmentally sustainable; therefore, companies who choose to renovate with higher efficient products should be granted rebates and tax incentives. Building STAR can reduce operating costs, create construction jobs, expand and shape markets for energy-efficient products and services, improve occupant productivity and optimize life-cycle economic performance.
- An analysis of the job creation and energy savings benefits of Building STAR by the American Council for an Energy Efficiency Economy indicates that 187,000 jobs would be created with \$3.3 billion in annual energy bill savings along with avoided emissions estimated to nearly 4 million cars.
- NECA installs and services electrical products that will move America toward less consumption of energy, less carbon emissions and overall more efficient use of our resources. However, widespread adoption of these energy-efficient technologies has been slow due to economical, governmental, and marketplace barriers. Building STAR will assist in breaking down these barriers.



## **National Electrical Contractors Association**

NECA is the voice of the \$120 billion industry responsible for bringing lighting, power, and communications to buildings and communities across the United States. NECA's national office and 119 local chapters advance the electrical contracting industry through advocacy, education, research, and standards development.

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