

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 11, 2019

The Honorable Rick Perry
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave, S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Perry,

We write to express our strong opposition to the Department of Energy rollback of lighting efficiency standards, which contravene Congressional intent and will harm both consumers and the environment. The proposed determination to not update the energy efficiency standards for general service incandescent lamps (84 FR 46830) and the withdrawal of the updated definitions of bulbs covered by the efficiency standards (84 FR 46661) will result in consumers paying billions of dollars more for energy and the emission of millions of additional tons of carbon dioxide.

Under the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act, which updated the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, the Department of Energy has to determine whether general service lamp standards need to be updated and whether certain types of incandescent lamps should continue to be exempt from the standards. A final determination needed to be published no later than January 1, 2017. If the Department failed to do so, Congress wrote a “backstop” into the law that would automatically require higher standards for general service lamps. That backstop has been triggered.

With this proposed rule, the Department is ignoring the backstop and is instead attempting to continue the exemptions for many incandescent and halogen bulbs. As a result, these short-lived and energy-intensive bulbs will stay on the market, despite the widespread availability of low-cost, high quality, and environmentally friendly light-emitting diode (LED) alternatives.

Additionally, the Department finalized the withdrawal of a January 2017 rule to include additional common household bulbs in the more stringent 2020 efficiency standards, which was also required as part of the 2007 energy law. This means that bulbs like round globes, floodlights, candelabra bulbs, and track lighting bulbs will not have to meet the higher standards—despite a multi-year stakeholder feedback process that found these bulbs should be included. These bulbs make up around half of the six billion bulbs used every day in American homes and businesses.

As Members of Congress who champion energy efficiency for its contributions to our nation’s energy security and to consumer savings, we understand the Congressional intent on energy

efficiency standards. These standards protect consumer budgets and the climate. Modern LED technology has continued to expand since the standard's inception. According to one analysis, eliminating the 2020 standards would cost \$14 billion every year, more than \$100 per household annually.¹ It would also increase carbon pollution by around 38 million metric tons per year.

These rollbacks are indefensible, both in terms of their costs to consumers and their contravention of Congressional intent. We urge you to retain the broadened January 2017 light bulb definitions; acknowledge that the backstop set to take effect January 1, 2020 has been triggered; and follow your statutory responsibility to update, maintain, and enforce strong 2020 lighting efficiency standards.

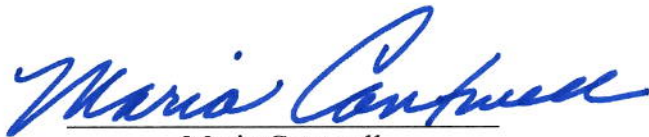
Sincerely,



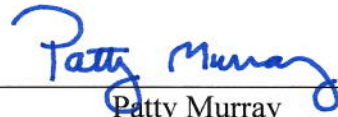
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Patty Murray
United States Senator



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United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

¹ <https://aceee.org/press/2019/09/doe-s-light-bulb-standards-rollback>



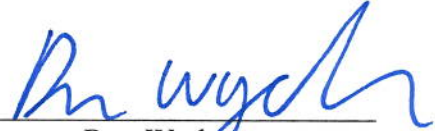
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



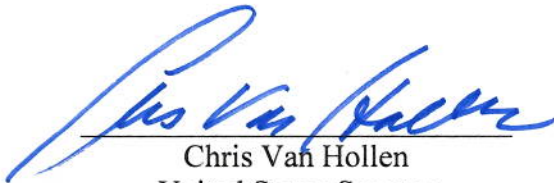
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Bernard Sanders
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