



COMMITTEE ON  
**ENERGY & COMMERCE**  
**DEMOCRATS**  
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

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## **Pallone Highlights Success of Home Appliance Energy Efficiency Standards**

*Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) delivered the following opening remarks at the Energy and Power Subcommittee hearing on “Home Appliance Energy Efficiency Standards Under the Department of Energy – Stakeholder Perspectives”:*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The appliance and equipment efficiency standards program at the Department of Energy (DOE) has been incredibly successful over the years in reducing energy consumption and lowering consumers’ energy bills. The program has also been beneficial to manufacturers, making energy saving products more ubiquitous and leveling the playing field nationally.

In fact, efficiency standards for consumer appliances and other products likely constitute the single most effective federal effort to reduce energy consumption in the U.S. According to the Energy Department, Americans saved \$63 billion on their utility bills last year because of these standards. And this has also resulted in avoiding 2.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions, which would equal the annual level of emissions from roughly 543 million vehicles. These figures are staggering, and highlight the dual benefits of this important program. Consumers save money, and our environment is spared billions of tons of pollution every year.

All of this began with enactment of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA), which was signed into law by Republican President Gerald Ford. This apparently started a trend because with the exception of an amendment to the statute directing DOE to establish efficiency standards for consumer products during the Carter Administration, every major expansion of the appliance efficiency standards program has been signed into law by a Republican President.

So while some of our witnesses and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle might lament the long list of appliance standards proposed by the Obama Administration, they should remember that –depending on your point of view—much of the credit or blame for the Obama standards can be traced back to two laws signed by President George W. Bush:

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The Energy Policy Act of 2005 and the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. And, while the 2007 Act was passed by a Democratic Congress, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 was born out of a fully Republican Congress and authored by the former Republican Chairman of this Committee.

This underscores an important fact: for the past forty years, energy efficiency has been a bipartisan issue where Republicans and Democrats have come together to reduce energy consumption and save consumers money.

How times have changed. Certainly, there are a few Republicans who still understand the importance of energy efficiency. Mr. McKinley has worked with Mr. Welch to demonstrate that bipartisanship in this area is still alive to some degree.

Yet regrettably, that seems to be the only Republican support for major efficiency legislation in this Congress. Consider the recent House vote to go to conference on an energy package that would actually increase consumption by rolling back efficiency. Again, how times have changed.

Could the efficiency standard setting process use improvement? Of course it could, because there's always room for improvement. Despite a revisionist view that disputes over efficiency standards are a new development, the fact is that the standard setting process has always yielded some controversy from one industry participant or another. But, these controversies were generally worked out and the result was better products, more efficiency, and often useful changes to the standard setting process.

I'm concerned that improvements simply may not be possible in this current Congress. Last year, when we were working to forge a bipartisan compromise on furnace standards, the less than forthright positions taken by certain stakeholders made me question the sincerity of so-called "reform" efforts. Perhaps it's just a matter of perspective: what some stakeholders view as "minor tweaks" look an awful lot to me like a thorough gutting of the standards program.

Ultimately, I believe a serious, successful energy policy for our nation must address demand, not just supply. Improving the use of the resources we have --to get more from less-- is common sense. That's why efficiency has traditionally been a concept that brought both parties together --and, Mr. Chairman, I hope it will again one day soon.

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