



EFFICIENCY FIRST IN WASHINGTON'S BUILDINGS ***PLEASE SUPPORT SHB 1747 & SSB 5854***

The AIA|WA Position

The American Institute of Architects Washington Council seeks to dramatically increase the number of high-performance, energy-efficient buildings constructed in both the private and public sectors.

At a time when the United States is trying to reduce its dependence on foreign oil, while at the same time trying to decrease the human impact on the environment, building high-performance, energy-efficient buildings is a universal solution.

Reduce Negative Impacts on the Environment

Buildings are the greatest source of emissions and energy consumption in America. They consume between one third and one half of the energy expended in the United States. Buildings use two-thirds of all electricity and produce approximately one-third of carbon dioxide emissions. These numbers are only expected to rise. Architects know that there are technologies and design tools available that can help minimize this pollution.

High Performance Buildings Save Money

Although the upfront costs associated with incorporating energy efficient design may be slightly higher, the overall costs, including maintenance, are much less over the lifetime of the building.

High performance buildings reduce energy use, waste production, water costs, operations and maintenance costs, and provide savings from increased productivity and health gains related to indoor environmental quality.

Studies show that high performance buildings strategies are no longer the expense they used to be. More importantly, these buildings actually save money in the long term – it makes for smart business. As more buildings are built to high performance standards, costs will drop even further, until such design becomes the standard.

Summary of the Legislation

The Efficiency First bills implement the recommendations of the Climate Action Team to significantly improve energy efficiency in Washington's buildings. This bill does this several ways.

- ◆ First, it sets a timeline for energy code improvements that will gradually improve the code's efficiency requirements until 2031.
- ◆ Secondly it requires large utilities to maintain records of the energy consumption data of residential, commercial and public agency buildings to which they provide service. They must also obtain written authorization or secure electronic authorization of a nonresidential building owner or operator to upload all of the energy consumption data to the US EPA Energy Star Portfolio Manager database.

KEY POINTS

- *Energy efficient buildings are a universal solution to dependence on foreign oil and reducing human impacts on the environment*
- *There are available technologies to minimize carbon pollution.*
- *High performance buildings are less expensive to build than in years past and save significant money in the long term.*
- *These bills implement recommendations of the Governor's Climate Action Team.*
- *HB 1747 and SB 5854 significantly improve the efficiency of Washington's buildings.*
- *American citizens support these laws. Washington can be a leader in efficiency on a National scale.*

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How the bill improves energy efficiency continued >

- ◆ Third, state agencies, colleges, universities, and school districts will be required meet specific Energy Star ratings and report to a state portfolio manager master account set up by the Department of General Administration.
- ◆ Lastly, the bill offers assistance to low-income households for energy performance improvements thereby encouraging energy saving and helping those in need.

What America Thinks

A recent nationwide poll of voters (1,000 sample, margin of error +/- 3.1%) conducted January 3-5, 2006, by two respected national pollsters - The Tarrance Group, a Republican firm, and Lake Research Partners, a Democratic firm - indicated that the "government should take the lead in promoting real estate development that conserves our natural resources such as oil, gas and electricity."

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