



May 9, 2010

Ms. Ashley Armstrong  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585

RE: DOE Verification Testing in Support of Energy Star

Dear Ms. Armstrong:

I am writing on behalf of the Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) to address the proposed DOE requirements for verification testing in support of the Energy Star program. AHRI is the trade association representing manufacturers of heating, cooling, and commercial refrigeration equipment. More than 300 members strong, AHRI is an internationally recognized advocate for the industry, and develops standards for and certifies the performance of many of the products manufactured by our members. In North America, the HVACR industry produces more than \$20 billion worth of product, and in the United States alone, our members employ approximately 130,000 people, and support some 800,000 dealers and contractors. These workers account for over 90% of the space heating, cooling, water heating and commercial refrigeration products sold in the country.

AHRI has reviewed the proposed DOE verification testing requirements and believes that the program is not necessary, duplicative and is a waste of taxpayers' money. The pilot verification program was initiated in 2010 in response to a report from the U.S. Government of Accountability Office (GAO) claiming that the Energy Star program was vulnerable to fraud and abuse. The pilot program was conducted in conjunction with the State Energy Efficiency Appliance Rebate Program (SEEARP) when EPA had no verification program in place. DOE's verification program, as it relates to Energy Star, was never envisioned as a permanent program. Rather, it was intended as a temporary measure until the time EPA establishes its own verification program. Now that EPA requires annual verification testing by third-party certification bodies on all Energy Star products, the DOE program is unnecessary, duplicative and has absolutely no reason to exist. As such, AHRI recommends against the continuation of the program.

In addition to being duplicative and unnecessary, we believe that the verification testing as it relates to the definition of “basic model” is inconsistent with the definitions used by EPA and the HVAC industry. AHRI has repeatedly stated that DOE’s definition of “basic model” (requiring that all models included in a basic model have identical efficiency ratings) is not practical, and if implemented in the EPA Energy Star verification program will result in a significant increase in the number of “basic models” and the number of annual tests required as part of the verification testing programs administered by third-party certification bodies.

Manufacturers of HVAC products group models with similar physical characteristics (such as compressors, coil surface areas etc.) in product families or “basic model groups” (BMG). However, models in a BMG can have different energy efficiencies. AHRI believes that variations in efficiencies within a BMG should not matter as long as all models in the BMG are subject to verification testing and re-rating in the event that a model tested does not meet its certified ratings. This concept has been used very successfully in the AHRI certification programs for over 50 years. We urge DOE to amend its definition of “basic model” to be consistent with industry and EPA definitions.

Finally, we would like to point out that Appendix A incorrectly lists commercial water heaters, very large package and split air conditioners, and walk-in coolers and freezers as Energy Star products. To the best of our knowledge, these products are not covered by the Energy Star program.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions about this submission.

Sincerely,



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