

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 9, 2022

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm
Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm:

Amid an unprecedented supply-chain crisis, we write regarding the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) upcoming installation deadline to meet new residential central air-conditioning and heat pump equipment Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) standards. We urge DOE to extend the installation deadline from January 1, 2023, to July 1, 2023. This extension will provide the home building industry with adequate time to install heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment that is currently in compliance with SEER requirements but has not yet been installed due to construction delays and supply chain issues.

Periodic, cost-effective increases in minimum efficiency standards for equipment remain important; however, the simultaneous deadlines for manufacturing and installing HVAC equipment before new efficiency standards are implemented create timing issues for builders across the country. In new construction, HVAC equipment is typically installed in phases with the air handler, furnace, and fans being installed in the attic at rough-in while the exterior condensing unit is installed just before closing, which is usually many months later.

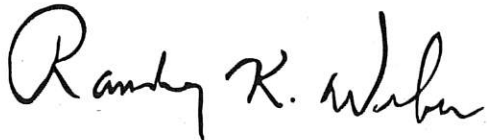
This timing issue is exacerbated by the nation's ongoing supply chain crisis. Severe shortages of building materials—including HVAC equipment—have resulted in lengthy construction delays and postponement of projects, along with dramatic price increases. These supply chain concerns make it almost impossible for builders to anticipate when they might be able to install exterior HVAC components. Additionally, many local builders do not have the resources to ship previously purchased units to northern climates where this equipment will continue to be in compliance.

The supply chain crisis and subsequent construction delays have had a dramatic impact on costs for builders, homebuyers, and renters. This comes at a time when the country is already experiencing a growing housing affordability crisis. Building material prices are up 47 percent since the spring of 2020, and Fannie Mae estimates that the monthly principal and interest payment to purchase a median-priced home has risen by \$500 since the beginning of the year due to the rapid rise in mortgage rates.

Therefore, we urge DOE to extend the energy efficiency standards installation deadline for HVAC equipment by six months as a reasonable safeguard to avoid unnecessary delays and cost increases for home construction. This extension will further provide home builders and home buyers with greater certainty regarding their construction plans at a time when many details and costs are outside of their control.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to our offices with any questions. We look forward to A reply at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress



Van Taylor
Member of Congress



Ken Calvert
Member of Congress



Brett Guthrie
Member of Congress



David Kustoff
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David G. Valadao
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