

Federal Building Energy Proposal of The American Institute of Architects

The American Institute of Architects believes that governmental policies, programs, and incentives should encourage energy conservation, especially as it relates to the built environment. We also support the aggressive development of renewable energy sources.

As architects, our members have strongly enunciated their commitment to promoting energy efficiency and waste reduction in the built environment, encouraging energy-conscious design and technology, and supporting national programs for more efficient use of nonrenewable resources and the development of renewable energy sources.

The AIA recognizes that a growing body of evidence demonstrates that current building planning, design, construction, and real estate practices contribute to patterns of resource consumption that seriously jeopardize the Nation's environment. Architects accept responsibility for their role in creating the built environment. Consequently, they believe that they must alter their profession's actions to encourage clients and the entire design and construction industry to work collaboratively to change the course of this country's energy future.

We believe that Congress should use its authority over federal buildings to show the way for the private sector in reducing the energy consumption footprint of the built environment.

Indeed, the federal government has made significant strides already. Executive Order 13123 requires each federal agency to reduce energy consumption at its existing facilities by 30% per gross square foot by 2005 and 35% by 2010 relative to a 1985 baseline. In addition, federal industrial and laboratory facilities are required to reduce energy consumption per square foot, per unit of production, or per other unit as applicable through life cycle cost effective energy measures by 20 percent by 2005 and 25 percent by 2010 relative to a 1990 baseline.

Last year, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 extended the energy reduction goals for existing federal buildings by mandating that agencies use a new baseline of 2003 energy consumption and achieve additional reductions of 2% each year beginning this year and ending with a 20% reduction by the year 2020.

Although some federal agencies have pursued these energy use reduction targets more rigorously than others, the AIA applauds this Federal Government for its leadership in this arena. We believe that more can be done, however. Using currently available technology, new buildings can be constructed to meet much lower energy consumption targets than existing buildings. For this reason, the AIA proposes an aggressive program of building design for all future federal buildings be included in new energy legislation.

The AIA proposes that within 24 months of passage, all federal agencies that construct and/or renovate buildings should be directed to immediately require that all federal buildings so constructed or renovated consume no more than one-half the energy consumption of the average building of the same type during calendar year 2005. The agencies should then follow a declining cap on energy consumption for newly constructed buildings and major renovations such that they meet the following minimum delivered energy performance reduction compared to the 2005 baseline:

2010	60%
2015	70%
2020	80%
2025	90%
2030	100%

This is modeled after a resolution adopted by the US Conference of Mayors (Resolution #50) for ALL buildings on June 5, 2006, and New Mexico Executive Order 2006-0001 signed by New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson on January 16, 2006.

The EPA has established a comprehensive inventory of building types and their related energy consumption data across all federal agencies. This inventory can serve as the basis for calculating the specific energy reductions required.