



Clean Energy Jobs ^{and} Oil Company Accountability Act

Home Star

Background

The nation's residential buildings account for approximately 22 percent of the nation's total energy consumption, 20 percent of total consumer energy expenditures, and are responsible for 17 percent of greenhouse gas emissions.

The large amounts of energy consumed by buildings also represent some of the largest energy-related expenditures for consumers; in recent years, those costs have been increasing. For instance, the average monthly residential bill totaled \$104 in 2008, an increase of 42 percent (\$73) since 2000.

Need and Importance

The need to improve the energy and water efficiency of the nation's residential buildings is driven by three factors:

- Forecasts by the Energy Information Administration (EIA) that residential buildings will increase their energy consumption by 1 percent annually through 2035;
- Opportunities to create jobs throughout the construction industry which registered a 20 percent unemployment rate in June 2010; and
- Opportunities for consumers to reduce their energy and water bills.

Legislation

The Clean Energy Jobs and Oil Company Accountability Act would provide immediate discounts to encourage homeowners to invest in efficiency upgrades by creating:

- The Home Star program which would provide immediate discounts for residential energy and water efficiency improvements. The legislation provides that on October 1, 2010, that \$5 billion from any funds not otherwise appropriated be available for Home Star incentives.

The \$5 billion would be coupled with private investment, and is estimated to generate three million home retrofits. The legislation would specifically provide consumers:

- Immediate discounts—through the Silver Star program—during the first year of the program between \$125 and \$1,500 that can be used when purchasing items such as insulation, duct sealing, water heaters, HVAC systems, windows, doors, and cool roofs;
- Immediate discounts—through the Gold Star program— during the first two years of the program between \$3,000 and \$8000 that can be used for retrofitting entire homes and retrofits tailored to achieve at least 20 percent reduction in energy savings;

Benefits

The Home Star program would help to save consumers money and create jobs throughout the country. The following information summarizes those estimated impacts:

- The \$5 billion investment in the Home Star program is estimated to create 168,000 jobs and would annually save 3 million American families \$200 to \$500 on their residential energy and water bills.
- The program would help reinvigorate the industries of construction, manufacturing, and construction retail industries that have lost well over 2 million jobs since 2006.