

NEWS

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CNAIMA, Broad-Based Coalition Call for Swift Senate Passage of Bipartisan Home Star as Part of Small Business Jobs Bill

Washington, D.C. – An alliance of more than a thousand business, labor, energy, and environmental advocates today urged the full U.S. Senate to expedite adoption of the bipartisan Home Star residential retrofit initiative. A bipartisan group led by Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), Olympia Snowe (R-ME), and Mark Warner (D-VA) has championed Home Star and is exploring ways to move the legislation on the next available vehicle.

Within 18 months of enactment, Home Star is expected to create 168,000 jobs in the depressed construction and home renovation market, where unemployment has been running two-and-a-half times the national average.

Home Star, which passed the House with bipartisan support in May, has been discussed as part of a Senate energy package that may or may not receive consideration this year. Bingaman, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, is reportedly considering introducing an amendment aimed at moving Home Star as part of the small business jobs package, which is on the Senate floor now.

“The sooner Home Star is signed into law, the sooner we can get tens of thousands of American small businesspeople - contractors, insulation installers, caulkers, and others - back to work,” said Kate Offringa, president and CEO of the Council of the North American Insulation Manufacturers Association. CNAIMA is a coalition of manufacturers and suppliers that produce virtually every type of insulation in North America. It is a leader in the broad-based coalition of business, labor, energy, and environmental champions all committed to the early adoption of Home Star. “Yes, Home Star promotes energy efficiency and environmental protection, but it’s also a sorely needed generator of jobs for hundreds of hard-hit towns and cities. The small business jobs package is a natural home for Home Star,” Offringa said.

Some 1,300 business and community organizations around the country have joined CNAIMA and the 1,700 grassroots supporters represented by the Home Star Coalition in pushing for the 2010 enactment of Home Star.

A delegation of CNAIMA members and contractors visited Capitol Hill offices today to advocate early adoption of Home Star. Home Star would provide \$6 billion in rebates to encourage homeowners and new home builders to install energy-efficient materials such as insulation. It will offer consumers two types of incentives: SILVER STAR will provide homeowners between \$1,000 and \$1,500 for installing individual energy-saving measures, such as heat pumps, insulation, and air conditioners; GOLD STAR will entice homeowners to reduce their overall energy use with rebates of up to \$3,000 in exchange for a 20 percent reduction in consumption.

"With good summer and fall weather for the next few months, now is the time to move on Home Star. The amount of energy this country loses ever year because of inadequate levels of home insulation is 30 times greater than the amount of energy we've lost in the tragic spill in the Gulf of Mexico," said Offringa.

"Home Star is that rare bill in the 111th Congress that has attracted support from across the political spectrum," said Offringa. "Given Home Star's deep bipartisan roots and the immediate shot-in-the-arm it would provide hard-pressed communities around the country, it would be a shame to see it languish in the Senate."

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About the Council of NAIMA

The Council of the North American Insulation Manufacturers Association advocates for policies and programs that encourage and incentivize increased energy efficiency through insulation in new and existing residential and commercial buildings and industrial applications. Membership in the Council of NAIMA is open to thermal and acoustical insulation manufacturers – regardless of insulation product type – and their suppliers located in North America.