

Summary of the “Appliance Standards Improvement Act of 2009”

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Test procedure petition process. Section 2 would amend section 323 of EPCA to require timely DOE response and action on petitions from stakeholders who are seeking revision of the test procedures that are used to measure energy use by consumer products and industrial equipment. The provision would enable more prompt solutions to test method problems, such as refrigerators tested with the ice-maker turned off, or televisions tested using a 1970s era method which does not work for today’s digital sets.

Sec. 3. Energy Star Program. Section 3 would amend section 324A of EPCA to strengthen the joint DOE/EPA Energy Star Program by:

- 1) Interagency agreement: Requiring EPA and DOE to update their interagency agreement to improve cooperation including: a delineation of roles and responsibilities, formal decision-making and dispute resolution, planning, and third-party program review.
- 2) Automatic and periodic market share review: Requiring EPA and DOE to review Energy Star market share every 3 years, or when Energy Star designated products achieve 35% market share, and if justified, update the Energy Star specification level.
- 3) Verification: Requiring third-party verification of the testing of qualified products.
- 4) Building Audit methods: Developing and publishing standardized building audits methods to encourage standardization of building auditing among the federal and state agencies, counties and utilities, and private businesses who conduct such audits.
- 5) Authorizations: Authorizations for the DOE and EPA Energy Star programs.

Sec. 4. Petition for amended standards. Section 4 would amend section 325 of EPCA to establish a 180 day deadline for DOE to grant or deny a petition from stakeholders seeking to establish new or amended product efficiency standards. This would facilitate action by DOE which has shown a pattern of being unreasonably slow to respond to stakeholder input.

Sec. 5. Portable light fixtures. Section 5 would amend sections 321 and 325 of EPCA to establish minimum energy efficiency for portable light fixtures (table and floor lamps). This provision would add new consensus standards to the law which, in this case, were developed through a rulemaking process in California. Since enactment of the National Appliance Energy Conservation Act in 1987, it has been the practice of Congress and DOE to support Federal adoption of consensus agreements on standards reached among key industry and energy efficiency advocacy groups.

Sec. 6. GU–24 base lamps. Section 6 would further amend sections 321 and 325 of EPCA in conjunction with section 5 to phase out the use of incandescent light bulbs in portable light fixtures.

Sec. 7. Study of compliance with energy standards for appliances. Section 7 would require DOE to conduct a study and report to Congress on the degree of compliance with energy standards for appliances, including an investigation of compliance rates and

options for improving compliance. There has never been a comprehensive study evaluating compliance with these federal standards.

Sec. 8. Study of direct current (DC) electricity supply in certain buildings. Section 8 would require DOE to conduct a study and report to Congress on the costs and benefits of requiring DC electricity supply in buildings. Some experts see an opportunity for increased efficiency by supplying DC because of fast growth in its use in computers, battery chargers, and other “plug in” products. However, DC must be transformed, at significant energy loss, from AC supplies. This study would provide expert opinion on whether there are significant savings and a Federal role in promoting DC supplies.

Sec. 9 Motor market assessment and commercial awareness program. Section 9 would require DOE to assess electric motors and the electric motor market, estimate opportunities for improving motor efficiency, develop an updated profile of motor system purchase and maintenance practices, and establish a national program to educate motor end-users on energy and cost-saving opportunities.