



**The American
Institute
of Architects**

January 27, 2016

Dear Senator:

The Sierra Club and the American Institute of Architects urge you to oppose the repeal of Section 433 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) contained in Section 1015 of S. 2012, the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015. As currently written, S. 2012 repeals this critical provision intended to improve the sustainability of federal buildings, and is a missed opportunity to move us forward towards a more sustainable energy future.

Section 433 requires that new and renovated federal buildings be designed to reduce their carbon footprint. This policy has already sent a strong signal to the design, construction and product manufacturing industries that the buildings of the future must be more efficient and less polluting. We simply cannot address the threat of climate change without addressing carbon pollution from the building sector, and Federal facilities must represent the best in American design, technology, and innovation. Unfortunately, the Energy Policy Modernization Act contains language that would repeal this cornerstone of federal sustainability policy.

The Obama Administration has already stated they would oppose many of the provisions in this legislation, including the repeal of Section 433. In the Statement of Administration Policy issued on H.R. 8, the energy bill debated by the House of Representatives late last year, the Administration stated that:

“H.R. 8 would stifle the Nation's move toward energy efficiency... and would weaken section 433 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, which requires a reduction in fossil fuel generated energy in Federal buildings.”

Furthermore, although the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office initially scored Section 433 as having a cost based on the marginally higher initial costs of complying with the mandate, we understand it now recognizes that this provision will have no net costs to the federal government. In fact, lower operational expenses for new and renovated federal buildings will save the taxpayers millions of dollars over a building's lifespan. Therefore, retaining Section 433 is not only environmentally responsible but also fiscally prudent.

With the repeal of Section 433, the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015 moves us backwards. The federal government should be encouraging the use of renewable energy and moving the built environment toward a more sustainable future rather than doubling down on the policies of the past. We urge you to oppose repealing this key provision and to support any amendments which would seek to preserve Section 433.

If you have any questions about this issue, please contact Christina Mason, Director of Federal Relations, American Institute of Architects at ChristinaMason@aia.org or Radha Adhar, Federal Policy Representative, Sierra Club at radha.adhar@sierraclub.org .

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Michael Brune in black ink.

Michael Brune
Executive Director
Sierra Club

Handwritten signature of Robert A. Ivy in black ink.

Robert A. Ivy, FAIA
Executive Vice President/CEO
The American Institute of Architects