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President Obama Signs Efficiency Legislation Supported by Coalition Including IAPMO

Washington, D.C. (April 30, 2015) — President Obama on Thursday, with the support of the High-Performance Buildings Congressional Caucus Coalition, which the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO®) chairs, signed into law the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2015, a package of provisions expected to yield approximately \$4.6 billion annually in energy and water savings by 2030.

Sponsored by U.S. Sens. Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio), the new law aims to reduce energy and water use by the biggest consumer in the U.S. economy — the built environment — by such means as encouraging efficiency in leased spaces, allowing the use of grid-enabled water heaters for demand response programs, and benchmarking of energy usage in commercial buildings.

“What we’ve seen is a coming together of Republicans and Democrats who are going to facilitate us being much smarter in terms of building buildings, how we use energy and, as a consequence, we’re going to save money for consumers, we’re going to save money for businesses, and we’re going to deal with issues like climate change that have an enormous economic and health impact on Americans as a whole,” President Obama said before signing the legislation into law.

The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act is comprised of three bills: the Better Buildings Act, the Water Heater Efficiency Act, and the Energy Information for Commercial Buildings Act. IAPMO worked with other organizations to ensure water efficiency and its related environmental and financial benefits was included in the drafting of the bills that make up the new law.

“Seeing this piece of legislation enacted into law is a wonderful sight,” said Dain Hansen, IAPMO’s vice president of Government Relations. “Early versions of this bill were void of any water related provisions, but this bill, now law, includes key water conserving provisions, which is a victory for everyone. IAPMO is pleased to have worked closely with Senate and House leaders to find a path forward for inclusion of such important language.”

“I’m pleased the president has signed my bill into law because it is good for the economy and good for the environment,” Sen. Portman said. “This is an important part of our energy plan for America that can help bring jobs back, help make our manufacturers more competitive, and actually help to protect the environment. I’ll continue to work for passage of my larger bill and a national energy strategy that boosts American workers while protecting the environment at the same time.”

“Granite Staters want to see Washington working together for the good of New Hampshire and the country,” Sen. Shaheen said. “Today, the President signed a bipartisan energy efficiency bill into law that creates jobs, saves consumers money, and reduces pollution. It’s always tough to convince Washington to not play politics with a good idea. But persistence has paid off and this legislation is a small but significant victory over legislative gridlock. Much more work on energy efficiency needs to be done and getting this legislation over the finish line demonstrates that there’s broad support in Washington for job-creating efficiency legislation. I will continue to reach across the aisle to pass more common-sense energy efficiency bills because it’s good for our economy and it’s good for our environment.”

For more information on the legislation, contact Hansen at (202) 414-6177 or dain.hansen@iapmo.org.