

April 6, 2022



Re: Business Support for Whole-Home Repairs Act

Dear Chairman Pittman, Chairman Saval and the Members of the Urban Affairs and Housing Committee,



We write to you as a coalition of companies and business groups who do business and employ workers in Pennsylvania. This letter voices our support for the Whole-Home Repairs Act in Pennsylvania, the improvements it would mean for our communities, and the growth opportunities it represents for our businesses.



We urge you to vote in support of SB 1135. The Whole-Home Repairs Act would establish a fund within the Department of Community and Economic Development. This fund would address habitability concerns in owner occupied and rental units, including measures to improve energy or water efficiency and make units accessible for individuals with disabilities.



The need for this legislation is clear. While various state, federal, and utility-led programs and funding exist, significant gaps and a lack of clear mechanisms for coordination between programs mean that many Pennsylvanians go unserved. For example, analysis of Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) services in PA indicated that more than a third of customers are deferred annually from participation due to structural or health issues in the home that aren't covered by these programs, such as moisture issues, roof repair, and knob-and-tube wiring.<sup>1</sup> This doesn't just leave extensive energy savings on the table. It also allows poor housing conditions and unaffordable utility bills to persist for some of the Commonwealth's most vulnerable residents.



The energy efficiency industry is vital to the execution of these energy-saving and health-improving measures, and it is well-established, ready, and eager to do this work. In fact, PA is home to well over 10,000 EE businesses, and EE workers exist in every single county in PA.<sup>2</sup> But estimates indicate that almost 5 million homes in Pennsylvania are due for energy retrofitting services and upgrades,

<sup>1</sup><https://nascsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PA-2019-2020-LIHEAP-Deferral-Program-Guidelines.pdf>, pg. 2

<sup>2</sup>[https://e4thefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Pennsylvania\\_2021.pdf](https://e4thefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Pennsylvania_2021.pdf)



and this work will require nearly 55,000 new construction jobs to serve 80% of PA homes by the year 2030.<sup>3</sup>

Growing the EE sector is good for workers and good for PA’s economy. Energy efficiency and other clean energy jobs are good jobs, with Pennsylvania workers reporting high rates of job satisfaction, opportunities for advancement, and provision of key employee benefits.<sup>4</sup> On average, US EE workers earn a median hourly wage of \$24.44—beating out the economy-wide wage (\$19.14) by an impressive 28%.<sup>5</sup> Investing in the creation of local jobs and training in the growing industry will improve communities across the Commonwealth.

Our businesses thank you for allowing Pennsylvanian to stay in their homes, improving blight in our communities, and creating local family-sustaining jobs.

Sincerely,

ACTION-Housing

Franklin Energy

Green Building United

Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance

MaGrann Associates

National Energy Improvement Fund

Performance System Development

Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh

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<sup>3</sup> [https://e4thefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Energy-Efficiency-Jobs\\_2021\\_All-States.pdf](https://e4thefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Energy-Efficiency-Jobs_2021_All-States.pdf), pg. 242-245

<sup>4</sup> [https://files.dep.state.pa.us/Energy/Office%20of%20Energy%20and%20Technology/OETDPortalFiles/2021CleanEnergyGapAnalysis/PA\\_2021\\_Clean\\_Energy\\_Gap\\_Analysis\\_Report.pdf](https://files.dep.state.pa.us/Energy/Office%20of%20Energy%20and%20Technology/OETDPortalFiles/2021CleanEnergyGapAnalysis/PA_2021_Clean_Energy_Gap_Analysis_Report.pdf) pg. 6

<sup>5</sup> [https://e4thefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Energy-Efficiency-Jobs\\_2021\\_All-States.pdf](https://e4thefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Energy-Efficiency-Jobs_2021_All-States.pdf), pg. 6