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PIMA Urges Law Makers to Support Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy Provisions in the American Recovery and Investment Act

Bethesda, MD, February 10, 2009 – With an informal coalition of businesses, states, energy and environmental organizations, trade associations and manufacturers of energy efficient products, PIMA urged House and Senate majority and minority leaders to support the critically important clean energy provisions in H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Investment Act.

The group wants to ensure that the final legislation is as effective as possible in promoting clean energy and meeting President Obama’s objectives of creating new jobs, encouraging new technology deployment and innovation, promoting energy security, and decreasing pollution caused by global warming.

“We fully appreciate the time and effort the House and Senate have devoted to their respective economic recovery bills,” noted Jared O. Blum, President of PIMA. “We are pleased that as a result of their efforts this vitally important bill will reach the President’s desk by the start of the Presidents’ Day recess period.”

In addition to the many important clean energy provisions included in both the House and Senate bills, PIMA and its coalition members recommend that the following provisions be included in the final Conference agreement and/or Conference Report:

- Fund the Department of Energy State Energy Program (“SEP”) at no less than \$3.4 billion (the House funding level), with appropriate conditioning and the prioritization language contained in Section 7006 of the House bill. The House funding level will permit the states to deliver vital energy efficiency services and innovations throughout the economic crisis, giving priority to existing state approved programs to enable energy efficiency funds to be expended quickly by state energy offices.
- Adopt the Senate funding level of \$4.2 billion for the Department of Energy’s Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program to enable states and local governments to aggressively implement energy efficiency programs.
- Regarding funding for “Green Federal Buildings,” ensure that funds are available to all federal agencies and to add language in the appropriate areas of the bill where funding is proposed for energy efficiency in Federal buildings (House bill pages 62, 87 and 211) as follows: “priority should be given to projects that are comprehensive and leverage private sector funds.” We also urge the Conferees to include the following language in the Conference Report: *“Comprehensive projects are those that utilize multiple energy conservation measures that are optimized as a package providing the highest level of efficiency and attainment of federal energy savings goals; additionally, in order to achieve maximum energy savings and job creation, the government is urged to use appropriated dollars in conjunction with private sector financing and to ensure funds are in compliance with Section 432 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (USC 8253).”* We continue to recommend that some of the funding for Green Federal Buildings be targeted or transferred to the Department of Energy’s Federal Energy Management program, a program which is adept at executing comprehensive energy efficiency projects throughout the Federal government.

- Include \$300 million in funding provided in the House bill for matching grants for rebates to be provided by the states for the purchase by consumers of higher tier energy efficient Energy Star products. Funding of \$100 million should also be provided to the EPA Energy Star Program as EPA has in place effective programs that states, municipalities, utilities, and businesses can use to quickly and effectively promote energy saving investments in all sectors. We also request that Conference language stipulate that rebates be provided to consumers only for the purchase of higher tier energy efficient products.
- Support that the Conference agreement include the Senate language funding the Building Energy Codes Program at \$100 million; this program promotes energy efficient building codes, training and technical assistance to the states and we believe the Senate language should be retained in the final bill.
- Contain the Senate language directing DOE to raise the contract ceiling on energy savings performance contracts entered into prior to December 1, 2008 in order to ensure that negotiated and fully approved contracts are implemented to provide immediate construction jobs related to Federal facilities.
- Fund the Weatherization Assistance Program at no less than the \$6.2 billion provided in the House bill. The House level of funding will allow this critical program to expand to meet President Obama's goal of weatherizing one million homes per year; the investment in this program is estimated to create 32,000 jobs in the auditing and retrofitting industries.
- In terms of addressing industrial and commercial energy efficiency, include the \$500 million provided in the House bill for the Waste Energy Recovery Incentive Grant Program, which provides incentive grants to the owners and operators of projects that either produce electricity or thermal energy through waste energy recovery. We also ask that the Conference Report contain language directing the Department of Energy to allocate funding to the expansion of the Industrial Assessment Centers, which provide "on the job training" to energy engineers as well as much needed energy efficiency resources to small manufacturing firms in every state.
- Support the Senate funding of \$1.6 billion for an institutional grants program for energy efficiency retrofits in schools and other institutions, as authorized by Section 399(A) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007.

In addition to PIMA, the informal coalition included:

- Alliance to Save Energy
- American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy
- Conservation Law Foundation
- Conservation Services Group
- Energy Federation, Inc.
- Energy Future Coalition
- Environment Northeast
- National Association of Energy Service Companies
- National Association of State Energy Officials
- Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association
- Recycled Energy Development
- SAVE Energy Coalition

About PIMA

For over 20 years, the Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association (PIMA) has served as the unified voice of the rigid polyiso industry proactively advocating for safe, cost-effective, sustainable and energy efficient construction. PIMA's members, who first came together in 1987, include a synergistic partnership of polyiso manufacturers and industry suppliers. Polyiso is one of the Nation's most widely used and cost-effective insulation products available.