

Oppose Legislation to Block Enforcement and Implementation of Lighting Standards

Energy efficiency standards for everyday light bulbs have been phased in over the last two years, giving light bulbs their first major technology update since the days of Thomas Edison. As a result, an energy efficient light bulb that complies with federal standards is now available for every socket in America.

In 2007, the U.S. Congress adopted—and President George W. Bush signed into law—minimum energy efficiency standards for everyday light bulbs to be gradually phased in between 2012 and 2014. These energy-saving standards have now been successfully implemented: New and improved halogen incandescents and LED (light-emitting diode) light bulbs have entered the market and are widely available along with compact fluorescents lamps (CFLs). However, in 2011 Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX) introduced an appropriations rider to prevent enforcement of the light bulb energy efficiency standards, and the rider was included in the final federal government funding bill for that year.

Unfortunately, this provision, which has been included in subsequent continuing resolutions to fund the government, prohibits federal agencies from spending money to enforce or implement these light bulb efficiency standards that will save consumers up to \$13 billion per year.

Lack of government enforcement capabilities opens the door for noncompliant bulbs to be introduced by foreign companies into the United States and threatens the manufacturers—and the domestic workers—who are developing and producing many of the new energy-saving bulbs. In addition, the rider prohibits the Department of Energy (DOE) from providing manufacturers with the supplemental information and guidance they need to properly comply with the existing law.



There is no justification for any kind of legislation blocking the light bulb standards. The transition to more efficient bulbs has been successful.

All the major lighting companies support the standards.

Congress should reject proposals to prohibit DOE from implementing or enforcing these energy-saving standards.



For more information,
please contact:
Elizabeth Noll
enoll@nrdc.org

www.nrdc.org/energy
www.facebook.com/nrdc
www.twitter.com/nrdc

LIGHT BULB STANDARDS ARE SAVING MONEY, ELECTRICITY, AND POLLUTION

The efficiency standards contained in the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) are technology neutral and allow any type of bulb, including incandescents, to be sold as long as they meet the energy efficiency requirements. Thanks to the standards, consumers can now choose among a variety of energy-saving options: new and improved incandescent bulbs that use 28 percent less energy, or CFLs and LEDs that use 75 to 85 percent less energy and last for 8 to 25 years under normal operation.

The standards are on track to deliver massive savings, including:

- annual utility bill savings of \$13 billion;
- annual emission reductions of 100 million tons of carbon dioxide, the main heat-trapping pollutant responsible for climate change; and
- energy savings equivalent to the output of 30 large (500-megawatt) power plants.

While energy efficient bulbs cost more at the store register, they are big money savers overall. For example, the new 10-watt LED light bulb that replaces the traditional 60-watt bulb will save consumers more than \$125 over the life of the bulb. With a shift to more efficient bulbs, the country can save enough electricity each year to power all the homes in Texas. (NRDC has prepared a light bulb buying guide at www.nrdc.org/energy/lightbulbs/files/lightbulbguide.pdf that shows the many new options available since the standards were implemented, along with each type of bulb's energy cost per year.)

Manufacturers support the standards: All the major lighting companies, including GE, Philips, and Sylvania, support the efficiency standards and oppose legislation that would interfere with the DOE's ability to implement or enforce them. These companies have made major investments and thoroughly upgraded and retooled their supply chains to comply with the law. The DOE's inability to enforce the standards against noncompliant, inefficient bulbs imported into the United States creates an unfair playing field, and U.S. companies will lose sales and suffer from a competitive disadvantage. It also puts jobs at risk in America, where the energy-saving bulbs are being created and manufactured.

Energy efficient lighting products are being developed and manufactured in the United States: U.S. lighting manufacturers are creating American jobs to meet the new demand for efficient lighting here at home, adding them in Ohio, California, North Carolina, and other states. The standards have jump-started domestic industry investment in research and development—and production—of more efficient lighting products. The U.S. energy efficient lighting sector currently employs more than 14,000 workers in assembly and manufacturing, research, engineering, marketing, and other professions, according to the Brookings Institute. Several thousand new U.S. jobs have been created by companies across the country—such as GE and TCP in Ohio, Cree in North Carolina, and Philips—to produce the next generation of energy efficient LED light bulbs. In addition, TCP, one of the world's largest manufacturers of CFLs, brought some of its production back to the United States from China to help meet the demand for energy efficient bulbs. Meanwhile, the halogen incandescent light bulbs produced by Sylvania are manufactured in their factory in St. Marys, Pennsylvania.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD REJECT BANS ON LIGHT BULB STANDARDS ENFORCEMENT

The light bulb energy efficiency standards are already saving consumers, businesses, and industry billions on their utility bills while reducing pollution and creating new jobs. U.S. lighting manufacturers are making energy efficient bulbs. Any legislation to prevent the Department of Energy from enforcing these energy-saving regulations makes those U.S. manufacturers—as well as American consumers and jobs—vulnerable to the introduction of noncompliant bulbs by foreign companies. We urge Congress to reject all legislation aimed at blocking the government from protecting our citizens and businesses from these substandard products.