



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

The Voice For Real Estate®

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May 8, 2009

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
United States Senate
703 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-3102

Chairman Bingaman:

On behalf of the 1.2 million members of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), we write to express concerns with draft energy bill provisions being discussed by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee to create a system of energy labels for homes and buildings. NAR is committed to advancing consumer understanding of energy efficiency and conservation and has developed extensive member training and Green certification for real estate professionals. However, NAR members believe that energy labeling will impose burdens on property owners and consumers in already troubled real estate markets without improving the energy efficiency of America's building stock in a timely manner.

Labeling every property in America will not improve building efficiency. Labels will stigmatize older properties and further reduce their value in many areas around the nation. At a time when retirement savings and property values have plummeted, many families and commercial property owners do not have the financial resources or equity to make the energy-related improvements necessary in order to ensure that a property will receive an attractive label and avoid being branded as less than desirable. Adding to the cost of property ownership without first providing sufficient resources to make those improvements will only complicate the economic concerns that owners are already facing.

Before branding homes and buildings with labels, consumers require a better understanding of energy efficiency and, just as importantly, must be given the financial resources and incentives to make needed energy improvements. NAR strongly supports the bill's provisions that provide the financial incentives needed by consumers to improve homes and buildings and result in significant energy savings in the very near term. But labels will not achieve either goal.

We appreciate the opportunity to share the views of our Realtor® members and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Charles McMillan, CIPS, GRI
2009 President, National Association of REALTORS®