



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

The Voice For Real Estate®

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President

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November 2, 2009

Secretary Steven Chu
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

Secretary Shaun Donovan
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

Administrator Lisa Jackson
Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Chairwoman Nancy Sutley
Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20503

Director Peter Orszag
Office of Management and Budget
1725 17th Street., NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary Chu, Secretary Donovan, Administrator Jackson, Chairwoman Sutley, and Director Orszag:

On behalf of the over 1.1 million members of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR), I am writing regarding the proposed Recovery Through Retrofit program.

On October 19, 2009, Vice-President Joe Biden announced the development of a major federal government initiative, the Recovery Through Retrofit program. This program seeks to jumpstart a national home energy retrofit market by providing: (1) access to home energy retrofit information; (2) access to home energy retrofit financing methods; and (3) access to a trained home energy retrofit workforce.

NAR strongly supports providing property owners with the tools and resources they need to voluntarily improve their homes and save energy. NAR has worked closely with the U.S. Department of Energy to develop a booklet “Energy Saver\$: Tips on Saving Energy and Money at Home” that includes information for homeowners on how to save energy in the home. NAR supports financial incentives that lead to actual energy use reductions, such as tax credits, grants or loan programs, as well as legislation that passed the U.S. House of Representatives that creates a comprehensive, voluntary, incentive-based, residential retrofit program.

In his presentation, the Vice-President discussed the various elements of the “Recovery Through Retrofit” initiative, including the development of an “energy performance label” and a “national energy performance measure”. As practitioners who understand the real estate market and consumers’ demand for energy efficient buildings, particularly in a recovering market, NAR members have strong concerns regarding any factor that may inadvertently lead to a decrease in property values or slow the nation’s emerging economic growth.

The Recovery Through Retrofit report mentions the development of an implementation plan that will make recommendations on how to accomplish the goals of this initiative. NAR requests a meeting to discuss and clarify some of our concerns regarding this program, including:

- (1) Is this program voluntary or mandatory program for property owners?
- (2) What regulatory and rulemaking procedures will be required to implement this program?
- (3) What statutory authority is the federal government using to conduct these activities?
- (4) What opportunities will be available for stakeholder participation and involvement?

NAR looks forward to working with you to develop a truly voluntary program that helps property owners reduce energy use and save money without impeding the nascent housing recovery. Please have your staff contact Russell Riggs at 202-383-1259 or rriggs@realtors.org to arrange a meeting at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Sincerely,



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

cc: Cass R. Sunstein, Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget

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