

SAMPLE DRAFT LETTER

April, 2010

The Honorable
U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510 (Senate) 20515 (House)

Dear Senator or Representative:

I am writing on behalf of **company or chapter name**. **Include # of firms represented or average number of employees**. **I am engaged in ...industrial, commercial, residential, architectural and specialty sheet metal construction**. I want to express my strong support for the Building Star energy efficiency proposal and ask that you become a cosponsor in the House and urge that the *Building STAR* proposal in pending jobs legislation to create thousands of construction jobs in 2010.

In the current recession, no sector has been harder hit than the construction industry, which has lost 1.9 million jobs since December 2007. ***Building STAR* would use rebates and tax incentives to quickly mobilize building owners, construction firms, the building trades, and manufacturers and distributors of building supplies to upgrade the energy performance of our nation's commercial and multi-family apartment buildings.**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the unemployment rate for the construction industry rose to a shocking 27% in February, losing 75,000 jobs in just one month. McGraw-Hill Construction predicts a continuing slide in commercial construction in 2010 that will cost thousands of additional jobs unless we take bold action now. *Building STAR* would help put these people back to work retrofitting existing buildings, and would do so fast. **It is the right program at the right time for our economy.** *Building STAR* would:

- **Create 125,000 to 188,000 jobs across the U. S. in 2010.** With a \$5 billion public investment that will, conservatively, leverage an additional \$10 to \$15 billion in private sector investments, *Building STAR* would create substantial jobs this year. The technology-specific rebates in *Building STAR* are based on existing utility-run rebate programs that already are driving commercial efficiency retrofits and creating jobs across the country. The rebate and tax incentive levels would be established directly by legislation, enabling *Building STAR* to be implemented immediately and quickly.

- **Benefit America's small businesses.** More than 90 percent of the contractors who perform commercial and multi-family building retrofits employ fewer than 20 workers. Even where large firms hold the primary contract, much of the work is subcontracted to smaller firms. Thousands of these firms would quickly rehire laid off workers. Small businesses would also benefit from reduced energy bills. For example, a restaurant that cut its energy costs by 20 percent could increase profits by 30 percent, according to EPA.

- **Provide opportunity to high-skilled workers and contractors.** The commercial building sector employs sophisticated energy services contractors and highly skilled workers. *Building STAR* would provide opportunities for these workers and contractors during the current economic downturn, preserving skills essential to improve energy performance over time across our nation's entire stock of large buildings.

- **Save manufacturing jobs.** Inventories of high-efficiency building products and technologies have been significantly reduced over the past year. An increase in demand will put people back to work producing these products and technologies, including insulation, advanced heating and cooling systems, energy-efficient windows and other highly-efficient products and services. As a global leader in advanced building technology, a large share of the new products will be sourced domestically.

- **Reduce energy consumption and consumer costs.** As McKinsey and other analysts have demonstrated, improved energy efficiency in existing buildings offers the fastest, most profitable step we can take to build a fast-growing, low-carbon, clean energy economy. *Building STAR* will help overcome market barriers that block energy efficiency from occurring at large scale. The size of commercial building retrofits ensures that we will reap large energy savings, reduce energy demand and drive down costs for everyone. *Building STAR* was developed by *Rebuilding America*, a coalition of more than 60 Contractor organizations, manufacturers, financial services companies, unions, and efficiency advocates, in conjunction with a number of outside technical experts.

We look forward to working with you to ensure passage of the job creation legislation as well as to ensure that Building STAR provisions are included to create construction and manufacturing jobs from retrofitting commercial and multi-family buildings.

Sincerely,