



Building STAR: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Building STAR?

A: Building STAR is a package of rebates and financing provisions that would create jobs in 2010 and 2011 by quickly putting people to work conducting energy efficiency retrofits (i.e., improving the energy performance) of commercial and large, multi-family residential buildings.

Q: Who supports Building STAR?

A: The Building STAR coalition has rapidly grown to include 80 business, real estate, financial, consumer, labor, and energy efficiency entities. It is a diverse coalition representing a wide variety of stakeholders who have realized the spectrum of benefits resulting from improved energy efficiency in buildings.

Q: How does Building STAR create jobs?

A: Today, about one in every four construction workers – over 1.9 million people – is unemployed. The manufacturing sector has also been hit hard by the recession; building material manufacturing is down by 40 percent, and 1.8 million manufacturing jobs have been lost since the latest economic downturn. Building STAR would help put these people back to work. Building STAR would jump start manufacturing and put highly-skilled workers back to work by installing energy-efficient equipment in commercial and multi-family buildings across the country. Building STAR conservatively estimates that 12.5 direct and indirect jobs are created per \$1 million of efficiency investment. By the end of 2011, Building STAR would create 150,000-200,000 jobs.

Q: How does Building STAR help small businesses?

A: Retrofits would be undertaken by a construction industry in which 91 percent of the firms are small businesses, employing fewer than 20 employees, and in which it is common practice for larger construction firms to hire many smaller subcontractors for their projects. Approximately 63 percent of the manufacturers that provide materials and equipment for retrofits are firms that employ less than 20 people.



Q: What are the energy and environmental benefits associated with Building STAR?

A: By the end of 2011, Building STAR retrofits would result in \$3.3 billion in energy savings for consumers annually and would avoid the need to build 33 300-megawatt peaking plants. It also would reduce greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to removing 3.95 million cars from the road. Because retrofits often replace failed building components that degrade the interior environment, such upgrades also would help improve air quality and the health of the building's occupants.

Q: How quickly could this program be put into place?

A: Building STAR could start creating jobs and demand almost immediately, because it consists of a simple process that would direct rebates straight to building owners or contractors, similar to existing utility and state and local rebate programs. The rebate program could be operational within 30-60 days of enactment. There are a large number of building owners ready to conduct retrofits now, given the appropriate financial incentive. Construction and manufacturing firms serving this industry have ample capacity to quickly ramp up to meet demand with their highly skilled workforce.