USGBC Urges Restored Funding for Critical Data Program

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Today USBGC along with more than 70 organizations, companies and advocacy organizations sent a letter to the Senate and House Appropriations Committees urging that Congress restore funding for the Commercial Building Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS), a national survey that gathers statistical information on U.S. commercial buildings, at the Energy Information Administration (EIA).

The letter was drafted and circulated by USGBC, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Real Estate Roundtable (RER) and members of the Real Estate Network for Energy and Climate Policy (RENECP), a network of professionals who support comprehensive clean energy and climate policies that advance building and location efficiency.

CBECS, a little known acronym outside of the building industry, has a huge impact on the real estate community as it is the data backbone of important programs such as LEED for Existing Buildings and ENERGY STAR. The recent budget compromise brokered by Congress and the White House cut EIA's funding by 14 percent. Because of the size and the timing of the budget cut EIA chose to suspend its work on CBECS for 2011.

Signatories of the letter, representing a diverse group of national buildings organizations, commercial real estate owners, architecture firms and advocacy organizations, urged that funding be restored to CBECS to ensure that chances to increase efficiency in commercial buildings are not squandered due to lack of meaningful comparative data.

"Opportunities to increase building efficiency and upgrade our building stock will be missed in the absence of more current and reliable CBECS data. Further delay in collecting and publishing new data will diminish the efficacy and reliability of energy benchmarking systems that depend on CBECS."

The committees of jurisdiction are expected to consider funding for EIA in the coming weeks.

Get more information on RENECP »
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