Congressional Members Introduce Building Efficiency Measure

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Yesterday, Representative Charles Bass (NH) and Representative Jim Matheson (UT) introduced bipartisan legislation that deploy energy efficiency programs across many sectors of the built environment.

H.R. 4017, "The Smart Energy Act," picks up on the bipartisan work of Senators Jeanne Shaheen (NH) and Rob Portman (OH), by enhancing financing options for building efficiency at the Department of Energy (DOE), as well as boosting energy conservation within the federal government by expanding the use of private financing tools to pay for energy-efficient building upgrades and consolidating federal energy data centers.

In a statement, Congressman Bass helped demonstrate the need for action to advance energy efficiency by saying:

"The federal government spends $7 billion annually to heat, cool, and operate its 445,000 buildings. Given our nation's fiscal constraints, a common-sense place to save taxpayer dollars is by improving the energy efficiency of the hundreds of thousands of federal buildings across the country."

In a letter to the sponsors, USGBC Vice President of National Policy Jason Hartke applauded the introduction of the bill, saying:

"Programs like these offer significant opportunities to leverage private financing to deliver real utility savings to school districts, municipal governments and expand investment opportunities for private commercial real-estate."

While this bill is far from being sent to the President for his signature, the introduction of this bipartisan legislation is an important first step in the process of increasing our nation's energy efficiency.

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