



Report: Build Green to Build a Better America

Published on 9 Mar 2012 | Written by Jason Hartke | Posted in [Advocacy and policy](#)

Here at USGBC we often say that green building sits at the nexus of saving energy, saving people and businesses money, and creating jobs.

Yesterday our friends at [Environment America](#) put that powerful combination of green building benefits into their own words. The organization, made up of a vast federation of state-based, citizen-funded environmental advocacy groups, released a new study showing how green building is all about...well, the title of the report: [Building a Better America: Saving Energy and Money with Efficiency](#).

The report details a set of policy opportunities that could help accelerate green building - so much so it could save American families \$450 every year in energy and reduce greenhouse gases by 30% from buildings.

What does that mean, though? As the report points out, that's the equivalent of taking 320 million cars off the road.

"It's time to build a better America by investing in efficiency," said Courtney Abrams of Environment America during the launch of the report.


"Bold efficiency measures that slash energy use in our homes and businesses can reduce pollution and save consumers money. The best part about making energy efficiency improvements is that they pay for themselves as consumers enjoy lower energy bills and a cleaner environment year after year," said Abrams.

And with so much of our energy going to power buildings (40 percent), we need to land on policy solutions that help us get there. The report highlights policies that would accelerate these tremendous economic and environmental goals, such as:


- Steady improvements to building codes over time so that all new buildings are increasingly efficient, culminating in a zero net energy standard by 2030, when new buildings should be so efficient that they can produce all the energy they need on site using renewable energy like wind and solar.
- Investing in energy retrofits and weatherization to improve the efficiency of existing buildings 30 percent by 2030.
- Supporting innovative financing mechanisms that will unleash public and private investment in building efficiency.

The report also reviews the leadership that the Obama Administration is showing to promote green building across the country and highlights successful efficiency programs and incentives at the federal, state, and local levels.

So I'll say it again. There's no greater, more compelling and more cost-effective opportunity to save energy, cut emissions, improve energy security, and drive investment in the U.S. economy than energy efficient, green buildings. Ultimately, this report highlights how sound policy measures can accelerate the transformation we need towards cleaner, greener buildings today and a more efficient and resilient economy tomorrow.



Jason Hartke
Vice President, National Policy and Advocacy
U.S. Green Building Council



USGBC staff

0 comments

[Leave a comment](#)

Leave a comment [Don't have an account? Create one](#)

You must be signed in to leave a comment.

Email

Password

[SIGN IN](#)