

JULY 30, 2010

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION: MECHANICAL INSULATION EARNS KEY RECOGNITION WITH LAWMAKERS

Dear Member,

With the summer in full swing, our elected officials in Washington have been taking part in a flurry of legislative action. With our representatives soon returning home to their states and districts for the annual August recess—and with many of them up for reelection in the fall—it is more important than ever that we leverage the support we've built in recent months to advance our legislative priorities now.

Fortunately for our industry and many others, the momentum to push forward valuable bills before the summer recess has resulted in progress for NIA's issues. Before I get to the latest movement on our primary interest, the Mechanical Insulation Installation Incentive Act, let me tell you about another important new law.

The Federal Buildings Personnel Training Act is an important bill demonstrating Congress' support for federal employees and contractors to be well trained in the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of federal buildings across the country. With the federal government being the largest holder of real estate, it is their duty to ensure personnel are well educated and able to make decisions that will promote cost and energy efficiency savings in their buildings. Along with our fellow commercial building operation and maintenance associations, NIA lent its support to this issue. The Senate passed its bill by unanimous consent on July 20, and on July 29 the House followed suit. With greater awareness and use of mechanical insulation in federal buildings, we can expect others in the commercial and industrial sector will soon follow. We will continue to follow the progress of this bill and hope to ensure that mechanical insulation becomes a recognized core competency.

Of course, our greatest commitment in Washington is to the enactment of H.R. 4296, the Mechanical Insulation Installation Incentive Act. Thanks to many of you, we were able to make a big impact in gaining the attention of members of the House Ways and Means Committee this month through a letter-writing campaign. Our efforts encouraged these members to include the Mechanical Insulation Installation Incentive Act in their green jobs bill. We are still working hard to get H.R. 4296 passed, but our efforts in sharing the critical importance of mechanical insulation have not gone unnoticed. In the current draft of the Domestic Manufacturing and Energy Jobs Act, tax credits are outlined for a variety of measures including advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, and transportation. Mechanical insulation may be included if it is named as one of the qualifying projects. Over the next few months we will work hard to find out how specifically this bill will help our industry, since the language names several industries.

We have continued to meet with policymakers and their staffs to share the job and energy efficiency benefits of mechanical insulation. Our efforts have helped secure further support of H.R. 4296, with three new cosponsors signing on since our last update, making a total of 60 cosponsors.

For several years now we have conceded that mechanical insulation is the lost or forgotten industry. While we still have a long way to go in having mechanical insulation installed and maintained in every commercial and industrial facility, we can take a moment to recognize the great strides our association has made in just the last year to change that notion. While policymakers are back in their states and districts during their summer break, we will continue to work with their staffs to make the most of the remaining calendar year. Through your dedication and support, we can all know that we've made a positive impact on the legislative process.

Regards,
Michele M. Jones,
Executive Vice President/CEO