

Insulation Advocate

June 2014 Insulation Advocate:

Victory on Capitol Hill!

If you regularly follow NIA's communications, you may already be aware of our exciting news: on June 23, the House of Representatives passed the Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Act! In prior issues of Insulation Advocate, I mentioned how the mechanical insulation language we had created for inclusion in the Shaheen-Portman energy-efficiency bill had attracted attention from members of the House of Representatives. Representative Adam Kinzinger (R-IL) introduced the language as its own separate bill in the House of Representatives, and Representative Jerry McNerney (D-CA) joined him as a cosponsor. The Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Act, also known as H.R. 4801, requires the Secretary of Energy to prepare a report on the impact of thermal insulation on both energy and water use when examining potable hot water in federal buildings.

NIA's successful efforts to get this language not only introduced but passed through the House of Representatives represents a singular opportunity for both our association and the federal government to gain more data validating that mechanical insulation has incredible potential to save energy, water, and money. A video of the House Energy and Commerce Committee discussing and approving the bill, and a video of Representative Kinzinger's speech bringing the Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Act to the floor of the House of Representatives for the vote is available on NIA's YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/NIAInfo, and we have the full text of the speech available on our homepage at www.insulation.org. Now that the bill has passed the House of Representatives, it needs to be passed by the Senate, and then signed by the President to be enacted.

Part of the mission of our Foundation is to spread awareness of all the benefits mechanical insulation has to offer to numerous and diverse industries. We enjoyed the success of these efforts when 19 organizations from the energy and water sectors, including ASHRAE, the International Code Council, and the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, among others, joined together to advocate for this bill and signed a letter urging the House of Representatives to pass this legislation. The widespread and fervent support for the Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Act proves that our efforts are yielding concrete results that are benefiting our industry and bringing more supporters to our cause. We will continue to utilize this support as we gear up to work on passing this legislation in the Senate.

In regard to the passage of the bill, Representative Kinzinger commented, “I’m proud to see the House investing in research that could significantly save both financial and natural resources all across the country. With the federal government being the single largest consumer of energy in the U.S., doing our best to maximize the potential savings from improved insulation systems is a commonsense step I think everybody can agree on. I hope the Senate takes up this bill and moves quickly to begin this important analysis.”

With the President making energy efficiency a defining topic of his final term, energy-saving technologies are becoming a focus for both the private sector and the federal government. Representative McNerney affirmed, “It is important for us to look for ways to save taxpayer money and make sure the federal government is doing its part to preserve our natural resources. Thermal insulation can be a simple and effective way to reduce costs and help conserve both water and energy. Additionally, we can use the findings from this study and make sure we are doing everything we can in both federal and private buildings to maximize energy and water efficiency.” The potential data we could obtain if this bill is passed could be used to create a compelling business case for the increased use of mechanical insulation in the governmental and private sectors.

It is a huge victory to have our bill passed by the House of Representatives, particularly given the difficulty of even introducing legislation on Capitol Hill in the current political environment. We intend to leverage the strong support we have cultivated in both our private sector and Capitol Hill allies to pass this legislation in the Senate. I would also like to extend my and NIA's sincere gratitude to Representatives Adam Kinzinger and Jerry McNerney for all their hard work in getting this legislation passed by the House of Representatives. As we continue to support this legislation and promote insulation, we will need the support of our membership and the industry; stay tuned for more news and information on how you can get involved as we work to pass the Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Act in the Senate!

Best Regards,

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NIA is a not-for-profit trade association representing both merit (open shop) and union contractors, distributors, laminators, fabricators, and manufacturers that provide thermal insulation, insulation accessories, and components to the commercial, mechanical, and industrial markets throughout the nation. Since 1953, the northern Virginia-based association has been the voice of the insulation industry and is dedicated to keeping the commercial and industrial insulation industry up to date on the latest industry trends and technologies. For more information, visit www.insulation.org.