

# Insulation Advocate

## NIA's Insulation Advocate: Update on September's Activities Department of Veterans Affairs to Start Insulation Assessments

We have exciting news to share! On September 27, 2016, right before recessing to return to their districts, Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) to continue funding the federal government through December 9, 2016. This legislation included the 2017 Military Construction-VA Appropriations bill, which NIA has been working to pass. This bill included the following language:

Mechanical insulation assessments.—The Committee acknowledges the cost savings possible through energy savings associated with proper insulation, and encourages VA to work in collaboration with industry partners to conduct a mechanical insulation energy and water assessment at several representative VA hospitals. **The assessment should study the potential for improved energy and water efficiency of the selected medical center mechanical systems by applying mechanical insulation in repair, replacement, or upgrade applications.** Assessment results shall be shared through a report to the Committee not later than 60 days after enactment of this Act.

We are thrilled to report that this bill was passed as part of the CR! The bill requires that assessment results that include mechanical insulation improvements will be shared not later than 60 days after enactment. Thus, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) should begin working on the assessments very quickly. This is a huge success for the insulation industry; we are actively working to connect with the administrators at the VA to see how we can be of assistance to them. Once the assessments are complete and the water and energy savings are made clear, we will strongly advocate for these case studies be used as “best practices” for all VA facilities. In addition, our hope and our strategy is to continue this process at other federal agencies. We will request that these assessments be provided to NIA so that this concrete data can be used to continue to make the case for the increased use of insulation in all industries. Every assessment we are able to get that proves the value of insulation is one more tool we can use to increase awareness of the benefits of insulation and get it properly installed in more facilities.

As you know, both Congress and the *Insulation Advocate* took a recess for August—but NIA was doing anything but resting. In August, we joined numerous organizations in sending a letter to the Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the Chair and Ranking

Member of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce. This letter strongly encouraged the leadership of these committees to pass bipartisan energy legislation—and requested that energy code legislation be included in any future bills. While the Senate energy bill under consideration included language on building codes, the House energy bill did not. Passing updated building code legislation is absolutely crucial, and will help to ensure future buildings and facilities will have the proper insulation. Working with both Houses of Congress on energy legislation for fiscal year 2017 is a top priority for NIA, and will be one of our main areas of focus after the election when Congress returns.

In September, NIA also sent a letter to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), pledging to engage with the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) to provide support as NIST works on its disaster resilience objectives. Proper insulation is an important part of disaster preparedness, and we will continue to provide support as NIST works on its disaster resilience plans. We also signed onto a letter from the Family Business Coalition opposing the proposed increase to the estate tax, which would increase the tax burden on family businesses.

Congress will be out of session for October as Senators and Representatives return to their districts for the home stretch of the upcoming election, but NIA plans to stay active in promoting the industry and working on legislation for when Congress returns. Stay tuned for more Foundation news!

Best Regards,  
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NIA EVP/CEO

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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](http://www.Insulation.org).

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