

October 2, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Senate Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
U.S. Senate Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer,

Our organizations represent a broad sector of the residential and commercial construction and real estate industry, including builders, contractors, lenders, borrowers, owners, operators, utilities and product manufacturers. We urge the U.S. Senate to vote in favor of Senator John Cornyn's Amendment #1551, *Protect Affordable Housing for Low Income Americans*. This amendment requires the Department of Energy (DOE) to factor in housing costs when setting energy savings targets pursuant to a provision in the underlying bill text offered by Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). That language sets onerous energy targets to the code development process. The Cornyn amendment is designed to protect homeownership and rental opportunities for working class families from cost increases due to the Portman-Shaheen language.

Housing affordability is at crisis levels with a large number of both renters and homeowners paying a rising share of family income for their housing choices. Owning or renting a suitable home is increasingly out of financial reach for many households. S. 2657, the *American Energy Innovation Act*, would require DOE to set energy targets at the "maximum level of energy efficiency... and life cycle cost effective." In the past, DOE has increasingly advocated for a prescriptive approach that favors certain products, technologies, and energy sources. The Portman-Shaheen language will lead to a building code that is inflexible and very expensive. Consumers deserve energy choice and a reasonable return on their investment when it comes to required energy efficiency improvements. The Cornyn amendment will ensure that low-and-moderate income families and individuals are still able to achieve the dream of homeownership and housing choice while increasing energy efficiency in new home construction.

Our organizations have long supported the development and implementation of reasonable, practical, and cost-effective building codes and standards. We strongly urge you to support Amendment #1551, *Protect Affordable Housing for Low Income Americans*.

Thank you for your consideration on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

AGC Glass North America
American Gas Association
American Public Gas Association
American Supply Association
American Wood Council
Hearth, Patio, and Barbeque Association
Manufactured Housing Institute
Mortgage Bankers Association
National Association of Home Builders
National Electrical Contractors Association
National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association
National Propane Gas Association
NSG/Pilkington North America
Portland Cement Association
Window and Door Manufacturers