

[Same letter sent to the Ranking Minority Member]

28 February 2008

The Honorable George Miller, Chairman
House Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing on behalf of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers - United States of America (IEEE-USA) to express our strong support for the “School Building Enhancement Act,” H.R. 3197, sponsored by Congressman Rush Holt (NJ).

Increasing energy efficiency is a key component of our national energy policy. IEEE-USA advocates legislation supporting incentives for capital investment in energy efficiency and the development of efficiency standards such as those called for in H.R. 3197.

Educational facilities account for more than 10% of the energy consumption in the commercial sector, about 2% of overall US consumption. As such, schools represent a significant element of consumption which can be effectively targeted because of their institutional nature.

However, we note that by targeting schools, this initiative is especially attractive because benefits will accrue on multiple levels, in addition to those directly related to reduced consumption. Funds not spent on energy can be applied directly to the educational mission by purchasing books, hiring teachers, etc. Improved heating, ventilation, and lighting systems can enhance the classroom environment and improve the health and performance of students. The energy conservation initiative can become a component of the schools educational programs, influencing the ideas and behavior of the next generation.

Funds invested in educational facilities are always a good investment in our nation’s future, as long as they can be effectively applied. Federal programs within the Department of Energy (EnergySmart Schools) and the Environmental Protection Agency (Energy Star for K-12 School Districts) are already in place that dovetail with the objectives of the School Building Enhancement Act which should ensure that the taxpayer’s money is well spent by this initiative. To reinforce this objective, IEEE-USA emphasizes the importance of periodic feedback to the committee about success stories.

IEEE-USA is an organizational unit of the IEEE. It was created in 1973 to advance the public good and promote the careers and public-policy interests of the more than 225,000 technology professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. The IEEE is the world's largest technical professional society. For more information, go to <http://www.ieeeusa.org> or contact Bill Williams at 202-530-8331.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Russell J. Lefevre". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Russell Lefevre
President, IEEE-USA

RL/ww:ms

Cc: The Honorable Rush Holt