



## State Representative Casey Weinstein House Bill 134 – Energy Star Tax Holiday

Chair Merrin, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding House Bill 134. My joint sponsor, Representative Niraj Antani, has already informed you as to the tax benefit our bill will provide, and I'd like to follow up in testifying in regards to the some of the other benefits putting a tax holiday on Energy Star-certified appliances, as well as heating and cooling systems, will bring to both individuals and the state.

On average, home appliances—including air humidifiers and purifiers, clothes dryers and washers, dishwashers, freezers, and refrigerators—account for 20% of home electricity bills. Dryers, in particular, are especially energy-intensive. Estimates show that dryers account for 2% of the nation's entire electricity consumption, having made little improvement in comparison to other major appliances. Indeed, the typical dryer uses as much energy in the home as a clothes washer, dishwasher, and refrigerator **combined**. That works out to an average annual cost of \$100 to individuals just to dry their clothes.<sup>1</sup> It does not have to be this way.

The United States Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency added dryers to the Energy Star program in 2012, and those dryers are up to 20% more energy efficient than the typical old dryers that continue to dominate the market. With an average life-span of 15-years, individuals with new Energy Star-certified dryers can save up \$300 over the lifetime of their

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/noah-horowitz/call-action-make-clothes-dryers-more-energy-efficient-save-consumers-4-billion>

device. That may not sound like much to some, but represents non-negligible savings for those who would most benefit from the sales tax holiday. For an individual who replaces not just their dryer, but all of their appliances with Energy Star-certified ones, the savings are even greater, totaling up to \$575 annually.<sup>2</sup> Best of all, we know this is a policy consumers would take advantage of. A 2016 survey conducted by the Consortium for Energy Efficiency found that 91% of consumers across the United States recognize the Energy Star label, with a majority of those surveyed preferring to purchase Energy Star products, “all other things being equal.”<sup>3</sup>

Of course, energy efficiency does more than save individuals money. Much in the same way that a penny saved is a penny earned, the most sustainable energy is the energy never used. In 2017 alone, Energy Star-certified products helped Americans save 170 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 130 million metric tons. For comparison's sake, that's equivalent to the kilowatt-hours it would use to power roughly 15.5 million homes for a year<sup>4</sup> and about the annual greenhouse gas emissions of 27.4 million passenger vehicles.<sup>5</sup> By enacting a sales tax holiday on Energy Star-certified appliances, we can further reduce our carbon footprint. We can also incentivize job growth in the energy sector by furthering demand for efficiency. There were over half-a-million Americans employed in the manufacturing and installation of Energy Star-certified appliances in 2018, with states like New Mexico, Nevada, and Oklahoma experiencing the most growth from the year before.<sup>6</sup> We should be part of that growth.

Chair Merrin, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I would be happy to answer any of your questions.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.energystar.gov/about/origins\\_mission/energy\\_star\\_numbers](https://www.energystar.gov/about/origins_mission/energy_star_numbers)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cee1.org/content/national-awareness-energy-star-surveys>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=97&t=3;>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.energystar.gov/about/newsroom/the-energy-source/energy\\_star\\_numbers](https://www.energystar.gov/about/newsroom/the-energy-source/energy_star_numbers)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/lara-ettenson/energy-efficiency-jobs-soar-now-make-them-available-all>