



## January Newsletter

Happy New Year!

Let's start the new year with some emerging good news! Congress has shown bipartisan, bicameral support this week for ENERGY STAR. A newly released funding bill for the EPA would maintain roughly the same level of funding for the program in the rest of this fiscal year! ACEEE has been proudly voicing our support for this commonsense consumer-focused program, which has delivered decades of efficiency and helped keep energy bills manageable.

To name just a few other impacts from our efforts over the past year, we have

- Supported progress at the state level, such as Maine's enactment of a law to expand its appliance efficiency standards
- Launched an [initiative](#) to help efficiency programs implement behavioral science-based approaches
- Collaborated with local partners nationwide to help them advance [affordable transportation options](#) and [home energy upgrade programs](#)
- Shaped new bills in Congress, such as the State Industrial Competitiveness Act and the Clean Competition Act introduced in December

While many challenges remain, our team is glad to have turned the page on a difficult year for energy efficiency progress, and we are preparing for new opportunities ahead. I'm especially looking forward to expanding and deepening our partnerships in 2026. Together we can strengthen our coalition to cut energy waste.

Warmly,

Jennifer Layke  
Executive Director



## Efficiency Update

- **Congressional efficiency rollbacks:** The U.S. House is set to vote this week on a bill that would revoke the Department of Energy's 2022 efficiency standards for manufactured homes and eliminate the department's authority to set them again. A new ACEEE [fact sheet](#) explains how the bill would raise energy costs and increase strain on the electric grid. Several other major bills that [attack energy efficiency](#) could also see votes this month.
- **DOE funding cuts:** The [funding bill](#) unveiled this week by the U.S. House and Senate appropriations committees would make modest cuts to most energy efficiency programs at the Department of Energy. The bill avoids the draconian cuts proposed previously by the president and the House, and it largely maintains funding for the Weatherization Assistance Program, State Energy Program, and appliance standards. But it would reduce the overall funding for efficiency programs by 12% for the remainder of the fiscal year, the most significant appropriations decrease in decades.
- **Fuel economy standards:** The Trump administration recently proposed to [roll back fuel efficiency standards](#) for cars and light trucks set by the Transportation Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in 2024. Those standards would save owners of personal vehicles an average of more than \$600 in fuel costs over the life of a new vehicle.
- **Texas utility programs:** The Public Utility Commission of Texas [approved modest changes](#) to the state's energy efficiency programs, including improvements to make more households eligible for free weatherization and to better calculate whether the programs are cost-effective.

## Our Latest Research



### [Unlocking Industrial Electrification in California](#)

This report from ACEEE and partners examines how California can cut pollution by updating electricity rates for industrial facilities to spur electrification.



### **Contractor Participation in Building Energy Upgrade Programs**

This guide from R2E2, developed by our partners at Emerald Cities Collaborative and Elevate, highlights opportunities for energy upgrade program administrators to support contractors.



### **Funding and Financing Sources for Small- to Medium-Sized Commercial Buildings**

This guide from R2E2, produced in collaboration with Elevate, outlines funding options to help commercial building owners afford energy upgrades.

See all our recent [blog posts](#) and [press releases](#).

## **ACEEE in Action**



*The ACEEE team gathered in Washington, DC, last month for a retreat.*

## ACEEE in the News

A few of our favorite media highlights from the past month:

- The [Tampa Bay Times](#) quoted ACEEE's Lowell Ungar in an article on residents of manufactured homes facing high utility bills.
- The [Rhode Island Current](#) cited ACEEE's brief on reducing costs for low-income households with percentage of income payment plans.
- [Politico](#) quoted Mark Kresowik on Trump administration efforts to dismantle programs that reduce electricity demand.

## Opportunities

- Deadline extended: ACEEE's [Energy Equity for Renters](#) initiative is offering no-cost technical assistance for at least five local governments and community-based organizations (CBOs) to help improve the energy efficiency of rental housing while preserving or expanding housing affordability. Local governments and CBOs must submit their application no later than January 15, 2026.
- The [Indigenous Power & Light Fund](#) provides rapid-response grants and loans to help Tribal Nations facing exorbitant energy costs or critical infrastructure gaps or that need immediate capital to complete a clean energy project.

## Staff Update

**New ACEEE job postings:** ACEEE seeks a [research editor](#) and [summer research interns](#).

**Elena Mantilla** joins ACEEE as executive and engagement associate. Elena previously was a program assistant at the U.S. Agency for International Development. She also worked at Planet Forward, a climate journalism organization housed at George Washington University, where she received a bachelor's degree.



**ACEEE on the road:** Reuven Sussman, director of ACEEE's behavior, health, and human dimensions program, will deliver a guest lecture on sustainability decision-making for the University of Toronto environmental studies program on January 16.

## Upcoming Events



March 24–26, 2026  
Phoenix, AZ

*Register by January 19 for the lowest rate*

[Learn more](#)

August 2–7, 2026  
Pacific Grove, CA

*Save the date*

[Learn more](#)

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