



Consumer Federation of America

**Statement of
Richard Eckman, Energy Research Associate
Consumer Federation of America
before the
Council of the District of Columbia
Committee of the Whole and the Committee on Transportation and the
Environment
in Support of B23-0204,
The Energy Efficiency Standards Amendment Act of 2019
December 9, 2019**

Good afternoon. My name is Richard Eckman. I am the Energy Research Associate for the Consumer Federation of America. Founded in 1968, CFA is one of the nation's largest consumer organizations working in the consumer interest through research, advocacy and education. CFA represents over 250 national, state and local groups, many of which are here in DC. For more than 20 years, CFA has supported and promoted cost-effective energy and water efficiency policies and practices at the federal, state and local levels. I'm pleased to testify today in support of the Energy Efficiency Standards Amendment Act of 2019, (B23-0204). Quite simply, it will benefit DC residents and businesses by saving them money on their utility bills—while also benefiting the environment.

The bill, which includes standards for 17 common household and commercial products such as computers, monitors, faucets, and showerheads is an excellent opportunity for DC to reduce energy and water waste, lower consumer utility bills, and cut emissions. According to data supplied by the Appliance

Standards Awareness Project, if the Energy Efficiency Standards Amendment Act is adopted:

- DC consumers and businesses will save up to \$20 million annually by 2025 on their utility bills. These savings rise to almost \$56 million by 2035.
- DC will reduce its water use by 885 million gallons annually by 2025, increasing to almost 2.6 billion gallons of water by 2035, or over 7% of DC's public water supply. This will help offset increases in water and sewage charges for consumers and businesses, reduce the strain on sewer infrastructure improvements and aid DC in meeting the goals of its Clean Rivers Project program.
- CO2 emissions will be cut by 28,000 metric tons of CO2, in 2025, equivalent to the emissions from 6,000 cars for a year.

Of the 17 products in the bill, 10 are common consumer products¹, six of these have no incremental cost, so consumers and businesses start saving money from day one. For example, there will be no added cost for faucets to meet the standard, but these faucets will save \$61 million from 2022 through 2035. The other four products all have relatively short payback periods – under 3 years. A case in point is the proposed standards for computers and computer monitors; they will have a payback period of 2.3 years but will save almost \$23 million from 2022 through 2035. Overall the benefits are three times greater than the cost of meeting the standard.

¹ Air purifiers, computers and monitors, faucets, showerheads, toilets, urinals, general service lamps, high CRI lighting, portable air conditioners, portable electric spas, residential ventilating fans.

As more and more consumers purchase the efficient products meeting the proposed standards, annual savings will grow, reaching nearly \$56 million and 2.6 billion gallons of water annually by 2035.

One product, air purifiers, can use more electricity than a new refrigerator, yet some do not even clean the air. A standard would presumably eliminate some of the least effective air cleaners on the market. Consumer Reports' testing has found that one model was 'not much more than a white-noise machine' and another received poor ratings for dust and smoke removal both on high speed and low speed.² By implementing the proposed standard, the DC Council can help the 1 in 6 DC residents who have asthma, particularly those living in in Wards 5, 7 and 8, where rates are the highest and can do so while saving them energy and most importantly money. Consumers who purchase an air cleaner that meets the standard can save about \$30 a year on their electricity bill saving a total of about \$270 over the typical nine year life of an air cleaner.

For most of the products being considered under this bill, DC can look to other states, such as Vermont, Washington state, and California, who have already adopted similar standards, to see the clear benefits that passing this bill will provide, and those states can serve as a resource minimizing the learning and implementation curve.

In closing, passing this legislation is a win-win-win for DC. The Energy Efficiency Standards Amendment Act will cut energy and water waste and reduce greenhouse gases while improving air quality. As DC consumers and businesses

² <https://www.consumerreports.org/air-purifiers/best-air-purifiers-of-the-year/>

purchase more products meeting the standards in this bill, they will save approximately \$56 million annually by 2035. CFA urges you to adopt this highly cost-effective pro-consumer bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Eckman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'R'.

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