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**Gov. Abbott Vetoes Energy Efficiency Bill**

*Amidst soaring temperatures and electricity prices, environmental groups decry move as harmful to electric grid and environment*

AUSTIN - Gov. Abbott vetoed [SB 2453](#), by Senator Jose Menéndez, and sponsored in the House by Rep. Ana Hernandez, a bill allowing the state to adopt strong energy efficiency standards for new buildings, on Friday. The measure, collateral damage to an unrelated [fight between the Governor and the state Senate over property taxes](#), had two main components, allowing the state to move forward with new codes that would have cut energy demand from new homes, as well as adopting advanced codes for new university and state-funded buildings, reducing strain on the electric grid.

The [bill analysis](#) notes that “the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code and the Energy Chapter of the 2021 International Residential Code are 5-10 percent more efficient than current state code. Allowing the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) to implement these new codes would ensure that new construction is more energy and cost efficient.” The bill had widespread support, including from the [Sierra Club](#), the Texas Chemical Council, the South Central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource, Environment Texas, the US Green Building Council and the Texas Association of Builders.

“While Texans navigate the pressures of high temperatures, grid stability, and keeping up with rising electricity bills, Governor Abbott inexplicably cut one of the best solutions to reducing energy demand from new homes and businesses,” said Cyrus Reed, Conservation Director of the Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter. “In a session where ratepayers were saddled with even more costs of subsidizing climate-polluting power plants, losing this critical legislation only ensures a higher cost of living for everyday Texans.”

A [study](#) by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory found that the standards, over the next thirty years, would save Texas consumers \$4.3 billion and prevent 45 million tons of pollution.

“This was a commonsense bill to save energy, helping our electric grid, consumers and the environment,” said Luke Metzger, Executive Director of Environment Texas. “With his veto, the grid will be more vulnerable to blackouts, power plants will pump out more

pollution, and we'll all have higher electric bills. This issue is too important to get caught up in some political fight. It's very disappointing."

There was no official opposition to the bill, and the bill included an important cost-benefit analysis requiring the State Energy Conservation Office to assess whether the savings from the measures outweighed any additional construction costs, and also allowed amendments to the codes to meet any concerns. The Sierra Club and other groups supporting the legislation are requesting that the Governor put the item on the call for a future special session, as indicated in his veto statement.

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