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Massachusetts Ranks #1 in Energy Efficiency
Sierra Club applauds great start, cites opportunities for growth and improvement

[Boston, MA] For the fifth straight year Massachusetts has been [ranked #1 in energy efficiency](#) among all fifty states by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE).

Massachusetts' continued leadership underscores the importance of state policies, especially the Green Communities Act of 2008, which treat energy efficiency as a resource, indeed the 'first fuel.'

"While this is a time to celebrate, we also must not rest on our laurels," said Emily Norton, Sierra Club Massachusetts Director. "The announced closing of the Pilgrim nuclear plant in 2019 means energy efficiency will only grow in importance. Massachusetts is already overly reliant on natural gas, a polluting fossil fuel with prices that can fluctuate. Energy efficiency reduces energy costs."

Norton added, "In fact, while some like to decry our high energy rates, the average residential energy bill in the Commonwealth is in the middle of the pack compared to other states, according to the Energy Information Administration. Why? Because of our strong energy efficiency policies."

The Massachusetts Sierra Club is especially concerned about the new draft stretch code proposed by the Baker Administration. Sierra Club, along with nine other advocacy organizations, submitted a letter to Mass. Energy and Environment Secretary Matthew A. Beaton on October 8 calling on him to strengthen the draft stretch code. The original stretch code released in 2009 was designed to cut energy use 30% and carbon emissions 40% compared to buildings built according to the base energy code. The update proposed by the Baker Administration is weaker in comparison. On the commercial side, it exempts buildings smaller than 100,000 square feet and only applies to new buildings - effectively excluding much of the commercial construction in the state. On the residential side it simply makes the voluntary 2015 IECC base code option of scoring a 55 or less on the HERS Index mandatory, so homes already using this option would not see any additional requirements.

"The Massachusetts stretch code earned national accolades when first adopted, so it is particularly disappointing to see this backsliding when it comes to our stretch building code," said Norton.

ABOUT Massachusetts Sierra Club

Sierra Club is the nation's oldest and most effective grassroots environmental group. The Massachusetts Chapter was established nearly fifty years ago and has a strong track record of enabling Bay Staters to "enjoy, explore and protect the planet."

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