



# NEWS RELEASE

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## ***As Wisconsin Continues to Slip in National Energy Efficiency Rankings, Sierra Club Supports Increased Savings Goals and Program Funds***

**Madison, WI** – [The American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy released its annual scorecard](#) ranking states' energy efficiency programs earlier this week. For several years, Wisconsin was in the top 10. Unfortunately, our state continued to slide in the rankings in 2012, placing 17th this year after dropping to 16th place in 2011. Top ranked states, including Massachusetts and Vermont have enacted aggressive energy efficiency resource standards requiring targeted annual reductions in electricity and natural gas use. States like Oklahoma, Montana, and South Carolina that significantly improved their rankings all increased investments in energy efficiency programs in their states.

Wisconsin was on the right track in 2010 when the Joint Finance Committee approved increased funding for Focus on Energy, our statewide energy efficiency and renewable energy incentive program, and tied investments to goals to reduce energy use. Unfortunately, Wisconsin's last state budget wiped out those increases and capped program investments to 1.2% of utility revenues. Legislators failed to restore funding last session, despite a [legislative audit that demonstrated that for every dollar invested in Focus on Energy, over \\$2.30 are saved](#). An independent study conducted by the Energy Center of Wisconsin also showed increasing program funding would create between 7,000 and 9,000 jobs each year<sup>1</sup>.

“As temperatures plummet, so do Wisconsin's energy efficiency rankings and our chance to save money on energy bills and create thousands of much-needed jobs”, said Shahla Werner, Director, Sierra Club - John Muir Chapter. Especially disappointing is that about 55 local jobs at Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation were lost or reassigned when the Walker Administration [granted the contract to manage Focus on Energy to several out-of-state companies](#).

"Wisconsin should set ambitious energy-saving goals and increase investments in energy efficiency in order to restore our place as a nationwide leader in lowering energy bills, cleaning up our air, and creating private sector jobs for businesses that manufacture, sell and install insulation, heating and cooling equipment, and energy efficient lighting,” said Werner. “We also need to make sure that new program contractors are as committed to achieving energy savings as previous ones”, added Werner.

*Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the Sierra Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Sierra Club's mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives. The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is made up of 15,000 members and supporters working to promote clean energy and protect water resources in Wisconsin.*

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<sup>1</sup> [Energy Efficiency and Customer-sited Renewable Resource Potential in Wisconsin](#), Energy Center of Wisconsin, 2009