

Issue Brief

AIA Government Relations Issue Position and Analysis

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AIA POSITION

AIA recognizes a growing body of evidence that demonstrates current planning, design, construction, and real estate practices contribute to patterns of resource consumption that will inhibit the sustainable future of the Earth.

AIA strongly supports the Section 433 roadmap for achieving net zero energy in new federal buildings by 2030, and it opposes a repeal of those provisions.

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Support Federal Sustainability Goals

Section 433 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 was passed with bipartisan support and signed into law by former President George W. Bush. This provision establishes incremental targets for the reduction of fossil fuel generated energy in newly constructed and majorly renovated federal buildings, with a goal of zero usage in the year 2030. This will lead to better energy performance for federal agencies and lower overall costs for taxpayers. AIA strongly supports this important policy.

BACKGROUND

As one of the largest building owners and landlords in the world, the federal government spends billions of taxpayer dollars each year on energy costs. Demand for more efficient federal buildings not only saves taxpayer money, but also is spurring the development of new materials, construction techniques, and building technologies that the private sector is increasingly adopting for their buildings.

The current Section 433 targets are achievable today. In fact, some buildings are meeting the 2030 target right now. For example, the retrofit of the Wayne N. Aspinall Federal Building in Grand Junction, Colorado is the GSA's first site net-zero energy building on the National Register of Historic Places.

Despite being criticized as a law that is "impossible to implement," the Department of Energy has released a proposed rule that would implement Section 433 in a way that addresses stakeholder concerns. Furthermore, Section 433 gives DOE the discretion to adjust or waive the targets for any buildings if the Secretary finds special circumstances making them impracticable.

Section 433 does not ban fossil fuels in all federal buildings. Buildings placed into service prior to 2030 will not have to be renovated to meet the requirements when 2030 comes around. The phase-in does not require zero fossil fuel use for any building designed or renovated before 2030.

