

# MEMORANDUM

**To:** GBI Community

**From:** Jenna Hamilton, GBI Vice President, National Affairs

**Date:** 03/04/26

**Re:** **Change in oversight/control of the federal ENERGY STAR program**

---

GBI Community,

As of today, March 4, 2026, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DOE) have fully entered into a Memorandum of Agreement transferring lead agency control of the ENERGY STAR program from the EPA to the DOE Critical Minerals and Energy Innovation Office. The MOA was finalized on March 3, 2026 between the two agencies, and under the agreement the transfer of lead agency authority remains in effect for ten years and can be extended in the future. Under the MOA, the agencies have 90 days to complete the transition.

This transfer of authority is not unexpected, as it was discussed as a possibility in 2025 as part of the ongoing restructuring plans being implemented by the federal departments and agencies. During 2025, GBI, along with many industry coalition partners, worked to educate Congress about the importance of the ENERGY STAR program as a tool that is widely used and supported in the private sector. These efforts resulted in a pullback of the administration's initial proposal to eliminate the program entirely, and in the appropriation of a specific line-item budget of \$32 million for fiscal year 2026. This budget appropriation represented the first time that the ENERGY STAR program had ever received specific, designated funding.

The Department of Energy is no stranger to the ENERGY STAR program. Section 131 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 amended the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to establish within the DOE and the EPA a "voluntary program to identify and promote energy-efficient products and buildings in order to reduce energy consumption, improve energy security, and reduce pollution through voluntary labeling of, or other forms of communication about, products and buildings that meet the highest energy conservation standards." 42 U.S.C. § 6294a(a). Section 131 also directed a division of responsibilities with respect to the ENERGY STAR® Program between DOE and EPA "in accordance

with the terms of applicable agreements between those agencies." 42 U.S.C. § 6294a(b)). We believe that DOE is well-equipped to manage and maintain ENERGY STAR and its key components. EPA and the DOE are directed to use their own funds to pay for any costs associated with this transition, and as the transition moves forward, to negotiate between the entities for the transfer of additional appropriated funds from EPA to DOE. As this process moves forward, GBI expects that a coalition of organizations will work to encourage congressional appropriators to move the new line-item ENERGY STAR appropriated funds into the appropriate accounts at DOE in the fiscal year 2027 appropriations process.

Please reach out to me at [hamilton@thegbi.org](mailto:hamilton@thegbi.org) if you have any questions.