

CONSUMER CHOICE IN HOME APPLIANCES

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TOPLINE: Federal policymakers should eliminate or relax laws and regulations that mandate efficiency standards for consumer products and appliances. Disclosure and consumer choice, rather than mandates, should be the policy paradigm.

BACKGROUND: Since the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (EPCA) and then the National Appliance Energy Conservation Act of 1987 (NAECA), the federal government has regulated household products and appliances. Regulations govern central air conditioners, room air conditioners, heat pumps, furnaces, fans, dehumidifiers, refrigerators, freezers, water heaters, washing machines, clothes dryers, conventional and microwave ovens, ranges, gas and electric stoves, dishwashers, lightbulbs, showerheads, faucets, toilets, televisions, battery chargers, and many other products. The regulations have become increasingly complex and costly. Most home appliances have been subjected to three to six rounds of successively tighter standards. These rules have substantially increased costs and consumer prices, worsened appliance performance and lengthened cycle times. Energy savings and the environmental impact have been exaggerated considerably.

Action Items (Congress):

- **Congress should repeal EPCA and NAECA** and replace them with a regulatory regime that requires disclosure of energy usage as estimated by a third party.
 - Consumers **should be permitted** to decide for themselves about the tradeoffs among upfront costs, energy consumption and product performance. Bureaucrats should not take these decisions from them.
- State regulation of appliance manufacturing should be preempted since the marketplace is a national market.

How It Would Make Life More Affordable:

- Eliminating the sprawling federal rules governing appliance manufacturing would dramatically reduce costs and prices and improve performance.
- Replacing the current system with a disclosure regulatory regime would allow consumers—rather than bureaucrats—to make decisions regarding the relative importance of performance, upfront costs, and energy savings.

Related Legislation: Don't Mess With My Home Appliances Act ([H.R. 4626](#)); The Liberating Incandescent Technology (LIT) Act ([H.R. 3341](#) and [S. 1568](#)); The Homeowner Energy Freedom Act ([H.R. 4758](#)); SHOWER Act ([H.R. 4593](#)).

BOTTOMLINE: It shouldn't be the federal government's role to dictate to the American people which type of home appliances they can and can't buy and which features those appliances must or must not have.