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July 31, 2008

Alex Baker
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building 6202J
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue,
Washington, DC 20460

Richard Karney
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW, EE2J
NW Washington, DC 20585

Subject: ENERGY STAR for Solid State Lighting

Dear Mr. Baker and Mr. Karney:

Please accept the following as feedback on the technical amendment to the ENERGY STAR Residential Light Fixture (RLF) Specification, version 4.2, released on June 2, 2008, as well as the ENERGY STAR program for Solid State Lighting in general.

Cree is a technology and market leader in Solid State Lighting (SSL), and has consistently been a champion and advocate for the advancement of both LED technology and the market adoption of economical, high quality, energy saving LED lighting solutions. Years of effort in this area have taught us that the technology can be difficult to understand and implement, and we constantly face the risk that poor quality products, over-hyped marketing claims, or ambiguous messages from standards bodies can cause the public to delay the adoption of SSL.

In the last 12 months, in partnership with our customers, the Department of Energy, academia, and others, we have been successful in documenting and independently verifying the immediate and tangible energy and cost savings that are now possible with well-designed LED-based luminaires for both indoor and outdoor lighting applications. We hope you agree that as a policy matter, anything that causes the public to delay adoption of SSL will waste energy, and as such, is not in the public's interest.

We find the RLF 4.2 document conflicts with Cree's and the industry's efforts to drive the adoption of energy-efficient LED lighting. Having two separate, overlapping ENERGY STAR criteria is confusing to the luminaire manufacturers who are designing products to these criteria, to the energy consortia who would build incentive programs to accelerate their adoption, as well as to the buyers of LED lighting products. This market confusion cannot be good for the ENERGY STAR brand, and more importantly, we believe this has the potential to slow market adoption of energy-saving SSL products.

We also have a high level of concern regarding some of the technical aspects of RLF 4.2. Specifically, the usage of a non-standard test method for measuring the luminous flux of the light engines, the lack of required minimum flux levels for these decorative lighting applications, and the allowance of very cold color temperatures in indoor lighting are of concern. These issues could directly affect the quality of luminaires that would gain ENERGY STAR approval, and could be assuaged by a rigorous peer review. However, this option was not available due to the manner in which the RLF 4.2 document was released.

We agree with EPA that the decorative lighting segment should have a place in the ENERGY STAR program in some manner, and also agree that this segment of the lighting market is not addressed in the DOE's ENERGY STAR efforts to date. However, the unilateral declaration of RLF 4.2 is not likely to accomplish this goal without confusing the manufacturers as well as the potential consumers of SSL products.

To avoid the industry confusion and delay that two separately administered ENERGY STAR programs for SSL will likely create, ensure only high-quality SSL products gain ENERGY STAR approval, and bring balanced market inputs to the development of decorative lighting criteria and specifications in the SSL ENERGY STAR program, we are calling on the EPA and DOE to urgently take the following actions:

The EPA should immediately withdraw the SSL provisions of RLF 4.2

The DOE should discuss the technical and market issues associated with bringing decorative lighting fixtures into the ENERGY STAR program for SSL with the EPA, as well as with members of the lighting, power consortia, and LED communities. This should be an open and inclusive process, with inputs from all stakeholders.

DOE and EPA should jointly define a plan for a single ENERGY STAR program for SSL products.

It is our sincere hope and expectation that EPA and DOE can resolve these issues and deliver a unified ENERGY STAR program for SSL as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration and immediate attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chuck Swoboda". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Chuck Swoboda
Chairman & CEO
Cree, Inc.

cc: Senator Richard Burr