

December 29, 2022

Ms. Taylor Jantz-Sell
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Jantz-Sell:

The Consortium for Energy Efficiency (CEE) respectfully submits the following comments in response to the proposal to sunset ENERGY STAR® Lamps, Luminaires, and Ceiling Fan Light Kits Specifications, released by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on November 14, 2022.

CEE is the binational organization of energy efficiency program administrators and a staunch supporter of the ENERGY STAR Program. CEE members are responsible for ratepayer-funded efficiency programs in 38 US states, the District of Columbia, and four Canadian provinces. In 2020, CEE members directed over 63 percent of the \$8.5 billion in energy efficiency and demand response program expenditures in the two countries. These comments are offered in support of the local activities CEE members carry out to actively leverage the ENERGY STAR brand. CEE consensus comments are offered in the spirit of strengthening ENERGY STAR so it may continue to serve as the national marketing platform for energy efficiency.

CEE highly values the role ENERGY STAR plays in differentiating energy efficient products and services that the CEE membership supports locally throughout the US and Canada. We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Market Transformation of Residential Lighting is a Great Success and Represents the Power of Partnership

CEE would like to congratulate EPA and DOE for the considerable achievement in advancing markets for high efficiency residential lighting through the ENERGY STAR brand over the past two decades. Market adoption of high quality, efficient lighting has increased dramatically, contributing to significant energy savings and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. CEE and its members have been actively involved in developing, expanding, promoting, and informing the direction of the program. The ENERGY STAR brand's recognition and credibility coupled with program administrator understanding of lighting markets and their direct customer relationships, led to sustained measurable change. The ENERGY STAR Partner network of manufacturers, retailers, and lighting showrooms was instrumental in this success. The ENERGY STAR label has been an instrumental tool in program administrators' ability to drive consumer adoption of efficient residential lighting through incentive program offerings, educational and marketing campaigns, and remains integral to the CEE Residential Lighting Initiative.

Cost-Effective Energy Savings will Diminish

With the U.S. Department of Energy final rules for General Service Lamps that was published on May 9, 2022, there will be little to no delta of energy savings available for many members to claim in this product category. The enforcement of a 45 lumen-per-watt backstop and anticipated new standards cover the vast majority of lamps in the North American market, which represents a new baseline effective this year. CEE concurs with EPA's rationale that, for residential lighting products, in addition to the backstop, upcoming new efficiency standards will capture the bulk of existing cost-effective efficiency gains. While we note some considerations regarding quality and backsliding later in this letter, CEE concurs with EPA's assertion that the criteria for sunseting an ENERGY STAR specification are met in this instance:

- Additional, cost-effective efficiency gains are not available or anticipated
- A standard exists or is forthcoming at the current ENERGY STAR level that will serve as a backstop, so efficiency gains are maintained.
- The market has evolved such that the product type is being discontinued

CEE Anticipates Reduced Utility Investment in 2023, and Especially 2024, for Residential Lighting

While some CEE members indicate they plan to discontinue residential lighting incentives in 2023 considering the forthcoming 45 lumens-per-watt backstop and anticipated new federal standards, others have indicated that they will continue offering residential lighting discounts in 2023 and even 2024, using 45 lumens-per-watt as baseline. Results from a member survey that CEE conducted in October 2022 confirm that many program administrators have already sunset their residential lighting programs as of this year, with others actively planning to retire them in 2023 or 2024. Only one CEE member indicated certainty of promotional offerings for residential lighting come 2024. Should EPA move forward with sunsetting the program, CEE appreciates the proposed allowance through end of 2024 as a sufficiently long ramp for the market to adjust to absence of the ENERGY STAR label. In particular, as those utilities who will still be looking to identify other criteria in order to continue promoting residential lighting to consumers beyond 2023, we support keeping the program actively in the market until the end of 2024. Beyond energy savings and program opportunity to claim efficiency from residential lighting offerings, CEE raises the topic below for EPA's consideration and potential concerns that might arise from sunsetting the program entirely.

Assess Risk of Performance Backsliding Absent an ENERGY STAR Label

Over the years, the ENERGY STAR program has dedicated significant effort to educating consumers about not just the energy efficiency potential offered by ENERGY STAR certified lighting, but the quality that consumers can expect when purchasing an ENERGY STAR certified light bulb or fixture, so that they don't need to compromise amenity when choosing efficiency. When choosing a product, consumers rely on the ENERGY STAR label for energy performance as well as quality, including long lifetime, reduced flicker, color maintenance, color rendering, dimmability, and audible noise. CEE members have expressed concern that consumers will no longer be able to tell which efficient products are higher quality without ENERGY STAR certification and labeling (for example, if they purchase a lower quality LED without knowing it and have a bad experience with the product, they may associate LEDs with poor performance).

Without ENERGY STAR certification, the market will not have a mechanism for defining aspects of high performance and quality lighting, not a customer facing label identifying the best performing products.

Members are interested in ensuring that shelves are stocked with high efficiency and high quality lighting products. Should EPA exit the labeling field for residential lighting entirely, CEE is concerned that the market will lack a mechanism for ensuring quality. We are interested to better understand whether EPA is coordinating another federal or third party entity to inform analysis techniques for product and market monitoring

CEE recommends that EPA conduct a market assessment of potential lighting quality backsliding, and, if it is determined that there is a gap in the market, that EPA engage in conversations with other product labeling or standard setting body, such as the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), who might be able to provide for this need. NEMA has successfully managed quality standards that have been referenced by ENERGY STAR, and also customer-facing labels. CEE would support and participate in discussions with NEMA and others to develop strategies for supporting the continuation of quality residential lighting. In addition, CEE would appreciate the opportunity for further discussion with EPA regarding how to support utility programs looking to continue incentivizing the purchase of energy efficient, high quality residential lighting products in the absence of ENERGY STAR criteria.

CEE would once again like to thank EPA for the opportunity to comment on the proposal to sunset ENERGY STAR Lamps, Luminaires, and Ceiling Fan Light Kits Specifications. Please contact Chloe Mayhew at cmayhew@cee1.org or 978-972-5511 with any questions about these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Taylor
Deputy Director