



May 15, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Senator Schumer, and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the High Performance Buildings Congressional Coalition and our more than 200 member organizations we commend you for the work that Congress continues to do to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic. As you work to provide additional resources to the Essential Workforce and to prepare the country for a staggered and sustainable reopening, we urge you to consider the role of the building sector both in addressing the challenges of the pandemic and in returning to economic prosperity.

The ongoing operation and maintenance of the countries buildings is an essential job function and is critical for protecting building occupants. Design professionals, engineers, contractors, facility managers, service providers and code officials operate facilities, maintain critical infrastructure and ensure the continuity and functionality of the built environment. As such they are critical to the support and operation of hospitals, research centers, government buildings, food distribution networks and other facilities necessary for the COVID-19 response. If these buildings shut down or are impacted operationally, so too is the country's ability to meet this crisis.

As the country begins to reopen, creating consistency and continuity in the operation of the building sector will become increasingly important. Even the most sophisticated building cannot run itself and increased demands on the facility, including recent CDC guidance and OPM guidance for federal buildings, often translate into increased demands on the professionals who operate and maintain these buildings. The need for standardized cleaning, workplaces screening, enhanced telework, workplace planning and social distancing all place additional demands on the building workforce and require planning and training. Additionally, to ensure the safety of our workers and instill confidence in the public, buildings need to have environmental health plans and safety procedures in place to demonstrate they have taken steps to mitigate health and safety risks. As we rise to meet these challenges, we urge you to consider common sense solutions to support these efforts and ensure that our buildings remain assets, not liabilities in an organizations strategic purpose. These solutions include:

- Continued recognition of the essential role that the building workforce plays in responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic;
- Grants to improve remote work capabilities for essential workers to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions;
- Providing grants for online learning and training for building personnel, including federal sector personnel, on the front lines of the response in areas such as disaster preparedness, operations and maintenance, building safety, communication and resilience;
- Research funding to better understand the link between building systems and viral transmission; and
- Grants to support the development and implementation of building reoccupation plans that includes both procedures to reopen as well as the incorporation of good hygiene practices.

As always, thank you for your consideration. If you have questions regarding this request, please contact Jeff Johnson, chairman of the High Performance Buildings Coalition, at [policy@hpbuildings.org](mailto:policy@hpbuildings.org) or 202-746-4484.

Thank you,

High Performance Buildings Coalition

AEC Science & Technology, LLC

ASHRAE

Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute

American Society of Interior Designers

Association of Energy Engineers

American Supply Association

The Green Building Initiative (GBI)

Illuminating Engineering Society

Institute for Market Transformation - IMT

International Association of Lighting Designers

International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials

International Code Council

International Facility Management Association

Passive House Institute – United States

Plastics Pipe Institute

Sheet Metal Contractors National Association

Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance

UL