

# **Appliance Efficiency Backstop (H.600)**

**Testimony for the House Committee on  
Energy & Digital Infrastructure**

**Ben Edgerly Walsh, VPIRG**

**April 16, 2026**



# Appliance Efficiency Standards

- **5 Decades of history**
  - **Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) of 1975 passed under President Ford**
  - **National Appliance Energy Conservation Act (NAEC) of 1987 passed under President Reagan**
- **Vermont “backstop” language in place since 2017**
  - **Act 42 signed by Gov Scott May 22, 2017**

# Why Appliance Efficiency Standards?

- They protect consumers, driving affordability and saving families \$100s annually



## Efficiency standards:

### Reduce utility bills for Vermont residents



Without standards, a typical household would have spent

**\$6,900** more

on utility bills over the past decade.



Collectively, businesses would have spent

**\$700** million more

on utility bills in that time.

# Why Appliance Efficiency Standards?

- They create *collective* savings, not just individual savings – not even just individual savings added up.



## Efficiency standards:

### Free electric grid capacity in Vermont



Without standards, 2025 electricity consumption would have been

**17%** higher.



Peak summer demand in 2025 would have been

**200** MW higher.

# Why Appliance Efficiency Standards?

- They save energy and reduce pollution



## Efficiency standards:

### Cut pollution and water waste in Vermont



Without standards, increased nitrogen oxides pollution in 2025 would be equivalent to the annual emissions from

**3,000** school buses.



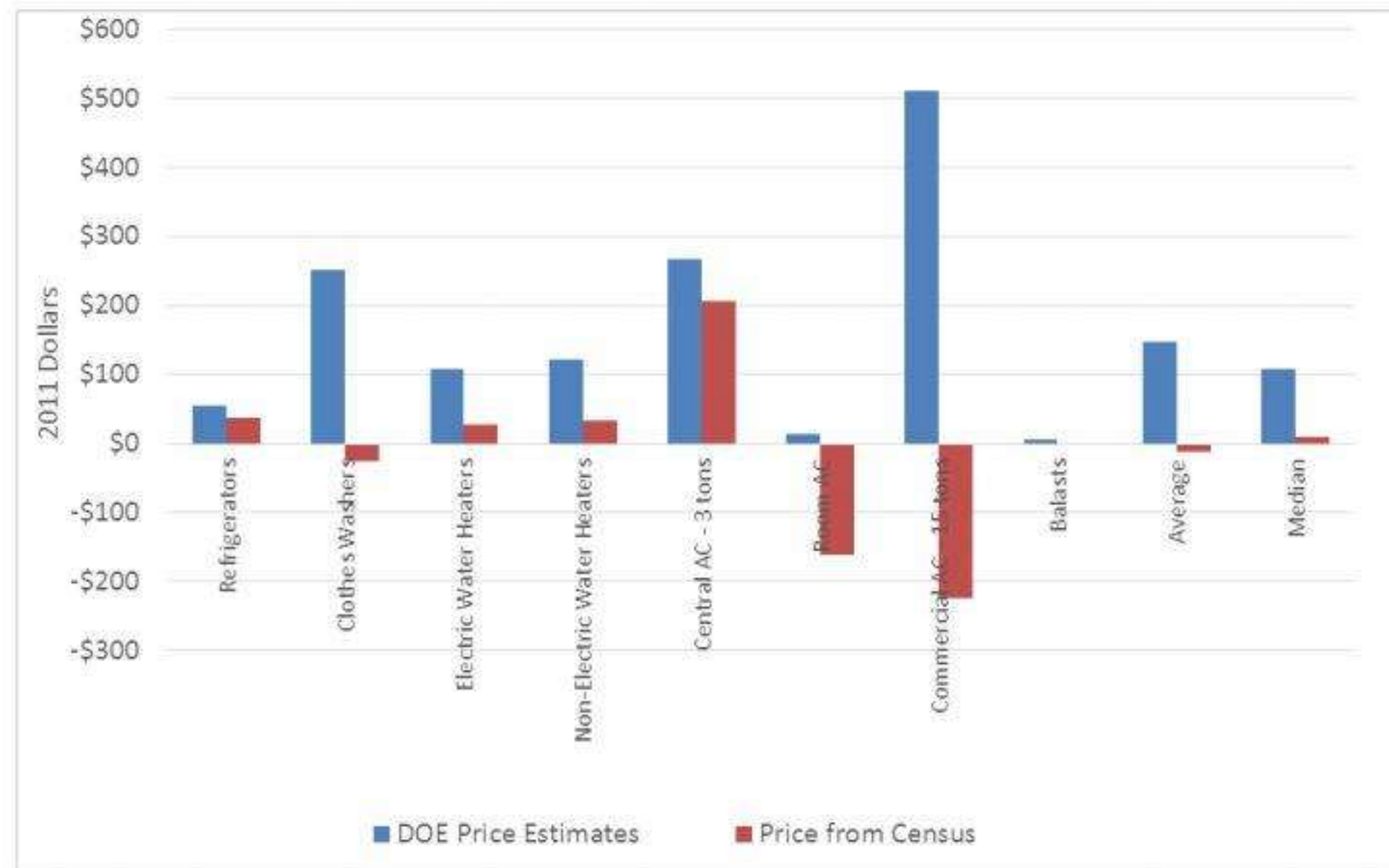
Increased water waste in 2025 would be equivalent to

**29%**

of residential water use in Vermont.

# A Note on Costs

Actual vs. DOE-projected up-front cost impacts  
(actual cost impacts are lower than projected)



- Appliance Standards: Comparing Predicted and Observed Prices, ASAP, July 2013

# **Why H.600 & a Federal Backstop?**

- **President Trump's Administration is attacking existing standards far harder than during his first term.**
- **If standards are repealed, voided, etc., Vermont consumers are at risk**
- **The more standards are pulled, the greater the risk - and the greater the lost benefits**
- **VPIRG strongly supports adding ASAP's Expanded Scope Electric Motor language**

**Ben Edgerly Walsh**

[ben@vpirg.org](mailto:ben@vpirg.org)

