

10/23/12

RE: Docket Number 12-EBP-1 / Comprehensive Energy Efficiency Program for Existing Buildings (AB 758) Scoping Report Staff Workshop

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Heating, Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Distributors International (HARDI) is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the California Energy Commission's (CEC) Scoping Report on Comprehensive Energy Efficiency Program for Existing Buildings (AB 758/ Docket Number 12-EBP-1).

HARDI members have long been supportive of programs to promote energy efficiency and for the purpose of this filing would like to address a point that was raised in the Scoping Report. In Chapter 7 of the Report (Chapter Topic: Compliance and Enforcement) the topic of increasing permit participation for building alterations involving HVAC change-outs is discussed.

"Another more aggressive option would be to track HVAC equipment serial numbers from the manufacturer or distribution points to actual permit addresses. This could be accomplished by a cooperative effort of equipment manufacturers, distributors, and enforcement agencies developing the process and database to track and monitor the equipment." (p.130)

HARDI formally states its opposition to serial tracking as a potential means of increasing permit compliance and enforcement. HARDI views this as an ineffective remedy which negatively impacts distributors and small business, adding substantial compliance costs to small businesses, potentially compromising private business and market data for a strategy which gets the State no closer to Title 24 compliance, or the CEC's stated goal of achieving a greater level of energy savings. Additionally, these requirements will put California-based distributors at a severe disadvantage when compared with those distributors located in neighboring states. The tracking of serial numbers for products installed by independent contractors is a near impossibility, and only possible to a very limited degree and after significant investments in data collection and infrastructure.

HARDI is a founding member of the Western HVAC Performance Alliance, and an active founding member of its Compliance Committee. The idea of serial number tracking has been discussed extensively in that forum and still fails to achieve industry consensus so HARDI believes CEC's time is better spent considering and pursuing alternative compliance and enforcement methods. HARDI and the WHPA Compliance Committee has helped coordinate stings and other enforcement actions with the agency, building officials, and the licensing board which have already proven to be more effective at driving permit compliance than serial number tracking ever could be. HARDI is more than willing to work with the CEC and the CSLB, preferably within the WHPA structure, but outside as well if necessary, to identify ways to improve compliance, however for the reasons outlined above we urge the agency not to consider serial number tracking as a serious strategy for improving permit compliance and increasing energy savings.

Regards,

Jonathan Melchi

Director of Government Affairs