



CUSTOM  
ELECTRONIC  
DESIGN &  
INSTALLATION  
ASSOCIATION

March 14, 2011

Energy and Technology Committee  
CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Room 3900, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

**Re: Connecticut Senate Bill 1 - CEDIA's opposition to proposed television energy efficiency standards**

The Honorable members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

On behalf of the Custom Electronic Design & Installation Association (CEDIA), thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding Connecticut Senate Bill 1, an act concerning Connecticut's energy future. CEDIA raises concerns with the energy efficiency mandates for televisions outlined in Connecticut Senate Bill 1.

CEDIA is the professional trade association of companies that specialize in planning and installing electronic systems for the home. These systems include home networking, home automation and communication systems, media rooms, single or multi-room entertainment systems, and integrated whole-house subsystems providing lighting control, security, and heating, ventilation & air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

CEDIA members include residential electronic systems contractors, manufacturers, industry-related professionals, professional services, distributors, and sales representatives and currently include 24 member companies who work in the residential electronic systems industry in Connecticut. Many of these companies are electronic systems contractors (ESCs), many of which are independent retailers and installers representing a vital part of small business in Connecticut.

Both ESCs and manufacturers are working to make more energy-efficient products available for customers and are working with customers to integrate and install energy-efficient products and solutions in the home.

CEDIA believes Senate Bill 1's proposed mandated energy standards on televisions will have devastating economic consequences including lost sales and jobs in Connecticut, and will have a significant impact on the residential electronic systems industry. With continued stakeholder collaboration, CEDIA believes an effective energy-saving plan can be implemented to move the marketplace toward the legislation's energy goals without the high risks and consequences associated with a strict mandate on a television's energy efficiency as currently outlined in Senate Bill 1.

## **Impact on the Residential Electronic Systems Industry**

Most CEDIA members are small, independent electronics specialists with a strong entrepreneurial spirit. These companies are referred to as electronic systems contractors, which install and integrate technology in the home. The flat-panel display is a vitally important part of an ESC's revenue structure and is often the entry point for consumers into this market. The sale of flat-panel displays allows our members to also work with their customers to suggest complementary products and services and integrate these flat-panel displays throughout the home with supporting systems, including lighting control, occupancy and motion sensors, automated window treatments, HVAC control and energy management. To further illustrate how electronic systems contractors continue to involve energy-efficient practices in their work, many CEDIA members have also begun installing solar panels to help with a home's energy management.

CEDIA strongly believes Connecticut Senate Bill 1's provisions on television energy efficiency would seriously restrict the business model electronic systems contractors operate under. According to the *2010 CEDIA Benchmarking Survey*, distributed audio and video and home theater / media rooms are the primary sources of revenue for ESCs, representing 48% of gross revenues in the 2009 fiscal year.

As the centerpiece of a home theater, the installation of flat-panel televisions is a significant business opportunity in our members' business models. By restricting the flat-panel display product mix in Connecticut, the proposed legislation would not only limit consumer choice, but would also place Connecticut-based retailers at a competitive disadvantage to other retailers in surrounding states and nationally. In the age of the Internet, consumers continue to research and acquire the flat-panel displays they desire through e-commerce or retail. This economic reality affects the business model of all retailers regardless of size. This consumer desire and motivation will not change even if a state mandate is imposed.

The flat-panel display is the entry point that allows an electronic systems contractor to begin building a relationship with the client, which leads to opportunities to offer additional energy-efficient solutions in the home. Without a mandate, our members are working daily to meet their customers' desire for more energy-efficient homes. Some of the energy-efficient services electronic systems contractors offer are:

### **Video Calibration**

Video calibration refers to the process of adjusting and aligning the technical parameters of video equipment to conform to standard specifications. Electronic systems contractors adjust these parameters from the high-consumption factory settings to more efficient settings appropriate for home viewing.

### **Lighting Controls**

Automated lighting control is gaining in popularity because it not only provides safety and convenience for homeowners, but aids energy efficiency. Because it is key to the home environment, lighting control is now a central application in most of the new solutions for home automation and energy management. An electronic systems contractor can automate the homeowner's lights to turn on and off based on occupancy, usage, availability of natural light, and other key factors.

Dimming is an important part of lighting control and another great way to save energy. Dimming incandescent light bulbs by just 10%, while hardly noticeable to the human eye, can reduce energy consumption by 10% and double the life of the bulbs. The life of bulbs, outdoor bulbs in particular, can be dramatically increased by a gradual ramp-up instead of the sudden surge of a light switch. Extending the life of bulbs means fewer bulbs being produced and fewer being thrown away.

### **Automated Window Treatments**

Automated window treatments and an astronomical clock sensor can add tremendously to the ability of a house to regulate the amount of energy used. Window treatments can be used in conjunction with the HVAC system to block out the sun in the heat of the summer, or allow its warming effects in the winter. Opening and closing window treatments can dramatically reduce the work that the home owner's climate control systems have to do.

By controlling window shades, drapery tracks, and skylight shades, homeowners can reduce glare and solar heat gain, which reduces cooling costs. Window shades also provide the benefit of protecting the furniture and carpet from damaging UV rays.

Daylight sensors control the lights and shades in the home by taking advantage of the available sunlight. The sensors balance the amount of electric light and daylight, saving energy and maintaining a constant level of light in the room. This concept is known as daylight harvesting.

### **HVAC Control**

HVAC controls are another programmable technology that can help increase energy efficiency while also enabling homeowners to enjoy their home environments more.

Electronic systems contractors can program the homeowner's thermostat to adjust based on occupancy schedules. Remote access can also allow the homeowner to adjust heating or air conditioning in anticipation of a change in schedule.

Electronic systems contractors work to integrate technology that fits a homeowner's lifestyle and also allows them to be more energy-efficient. Home automation helps tie all these technologies together and helps give people control of their home and conserve resources. Electronic systems contractors have seen an uptick in consumer demand for energy efficient solutions in light of the recent national focus on environmental awareness. CEDIA believes this trend will continue, and that it provides a responsible alternative to mandatory energy limits on the flat-panel displays sold. The flat-panel display begins the conversation, which leads to other opportunities for electronic systems contractors to offer additional energy-efficient solutions in the home.

### **Conclusion**

CEDIA supports manufacturer and retailer participation in energy-efficiency programs such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program and our members' continued work toward energy efficiency and savings solutions. CEDIA continues to work with its members through the association's Sustainable Lifestyles

Action Team and Technology Council to help research processes and procedures for developing energy-efficient products for consumers.

CEDIA urges the committee to recognize and further support the programs already in place, such as Energy Star, which are very successfully encouraging energy efficiency in televisions and do not have dire economic consequences.

The federal Energy Star program is an established and demonstrably successful program for energy efficiency in more than 35 product categories, including televisions and other consumer video and audio products. Energy Star benefits from strong participation by manufacturers and retailers and creates a competitive incentive for energy savings. The EPA updates the performance specifications for the Energy Star designation as market conditions change so that the Energy Star designation continues to identify the most efficient, cost-effective products on the market. The U.S. EPA recently announced new Energy Star requirements for televisions and cable and satellite boxes which will require these products to be 40% more efficient than conventional models in order to qualify for the Energy Star label. This is all achieved without harming consumers, innovation or local businesses.

On behalf of CEDIA, thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns on Connecticut Senate Bill 1. CEDIA looks forward to working with the members of the committee, staff, and other industry stakeholders on this important issue to Connecticut and the residential electronic systems industry. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



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