

HERE IS HOW BIDEN AND OBAMA DEPT OF ENERGY SUPPORT GREEN KICK-BACKS

Biden DOE Outsourcing Home Appliance Regulations to Left-Wing Green Groups

DOE's 'stakeholders' include several groups funded by progressive billionaires who get payola from Biden and Obama

By [Thomas Catenacci](#)

Each time the Department of Energy (DOE) finalized regulations targeting popular home appliances—including stoves, clothes washers, refrigerators, and water heaters—over the last several months, the agency included a similar line in the announcement: The new rules were crafted with the help of recommendations from a “wide range of stakeholders.”

According to the DOE, the stakeholders included industry partners and consumer advocacy organizations. A *Washington Free Beacon* review, however, shows 7 out of the 10 stakeholders whose recommendations DOE consulted are climate activist groups or left-leaning consumer groups. Those groups collectively boast substantial financial backing from grantmaking nonprofits that regularly funnel money to a wide range of progressive social and environmental initiatives.

Among the stakeholders are the Consumer Federation of America, Appliance Standards Awareness Project, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, Earthjustice, National Consumer Law Center, National Resources Defense Council, and Consumer Reports. Those groups have received millions of dollars from nonprofits such as the Bloomberg Family Foundation, TomKat Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, and Schmidt Family Foundation.

The revelation sheds light on how DOE ultimately welcomed the influence of far-left climate-focused interest groups while finalizing key government rulemakings, which, taken together, may cost Americans thousands of dollars when purchasing new appliances. And it appears to contradict any assertion that the regulations are the product of negotiations involving stakeholders across the ideological spectrum.

“If the agency is going to rely on these far-left groups, who have never met a regulation they didn’t like, the results are going to be obvious. And that’s what we are seeing,” Ben Lieberman, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, told the *Free Beacon*. “The reality of these negotiations is that the true interests of consumers never have a seat at the table.”

“These groups—they are really far, far left and are pushing a larger agenda that sacrifices consumers, rather than helping consumers, and I would include the so-called consumer groups. This is an anti-energy and climate change agenda that comes at the expense of consumers,” he continued.

In four recent regulatory announcements—targeting residential refrigerators [in December](#), stovetops [in January](#), clothes washers and dryers [in February](#), and dishwashers [in early April](#)—DOE cited the same [joint recommendation](#) assembled by stakeholders in September 2023.

Then, in a fifth announcement, [in April](#), DOE finalized standards for residential water heaters, which it said “align with” a [separate 2022 agreement](#) put forward by a similar coalition.

In each of the announcements, the agency said forcing manufacturers to only sell more efficient products would lead to substantial long-term consumer savings and massive emissions reductions. Activists have increasingly set their sights on the residential sector, which, together with the commercial sector, produces roughly 31 percent of the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions, according to EPA data.

“DOE’s robust rulemaking process provides multiple avenues for stakeholder engagement, including data sharing, public meetings, and comment submittals on

DOE's methods, policy proposals, analytics, and results," a DOE spokesman said in a statement. "DOE welcomes input and feedback from all stakeholders. As part of our process, DOE also considers stakeholder consensus agreements and negotiated rulemakings for consideration."

Both stakeholder coalitions, meanwhile, were led by the Consumer Federation of America and Appliance Standards Awareness Project, two groups with a long history of advocating for stringent appliance regulations and aggressive federal climate policies.

For example, according to its website, the Consumer Federation of America has for years pushed higher energy efficiency standards for new appliances and [even joined a lawsuit](#) against the Trump administration accusing it of not acting quick enough to update such standards. And, at the state level, the group has backed similar proposals, such as moves to outlaw fluorescent light bulbs in [Massachusetts](#) and [Maine](#), and a bill broadly [cracking down](#) on appliances in Connecticut.

The Consumer Federation of America, [whose members include](#) eco groups like the Center for Environmental Health and the Environmental Working Group, has further called for [electric vehicle mandates](#), stricter [fuel economy rules](#) to incentivize greater electric vehicle sales, and [called on](#) Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm to take actions "transforming the U.S. energy system" shortly after she was confirmed to the position.

Additionally, the Appliance Standards Awareness Project (ASAP) [states](#) on its website that it "advocates for appliance, equipment, and lighting standards that cut planet-warming emissions and other air pollution." The group, the website continues, focuses on federal rulemakings, congressional advocacy, litigation, and state actions to push stricter appliance regulations.

ASAP, though, is housed at the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) and was founded by ACEEE, the Alliance to Save Energy, the Energy Foundation, and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). Those groups have all been some of the nation's leading financial and vocal supporters of left-wing climate policies.

"Top consumer and environmental advocates came together with manufacturers to recommend efficiency levels that will save families money and even improve the performance of many of these products," ASAP executive director Andrew deLaski, told the *Free Beacon* in a statement, when asked about his organization's recommendations to DOE.

But Daniel Simmons, who led DOE's energy efficiency office during the Trump administration, expressed concern that DOE appears to have discarded the voices of

regular everyday consumers when putting together its recent energy efficiency standards alongside the stakeholders it cited.

“None of the consumer groups that the department cites really have a focus on the upfront costs of appliances or the utility of appliances,” Simmons said in an interview. “They are much more concerned about, say, the cost of the appliance over time, which is important, but if you cannot afford to buy an energy-efficient appliance because of the upfront cost, it really doesn’t matter how efficient it is over time.”

“We need to trust consumers, we need to trust people to make good choices because I think people do make good choices for what they want, what they can afford, and what they are looking for,” added Simmons. “I get frustrated when people’s options get limited by federal well-intentioned regulations.”

In addition to the Consumer Federation of America and ASAP, the stakeholder recommendations that DOE consulted were joined by ACEEE, Earthjustice, National Consumer Law Center, NRDC, Consumer Reports, Alliance for Water Efficiency, and Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance.

In a statement, Consumer Reports said it is an independent, nonprofit organization that is not influenced by corporations and foundations. It added that it aims to inform government decisions and provide input on appliance standards “that can save people a lot of money on their utility bills.” The other organizations didn’t respond to requests for comment.

Altogether, the groups have received tens of millions of dollars from pass-through nonprofits, many of which are overseen by left-wing billionaires, such as Michael Bloomberg, Tom Steyer, Hansjorg Wyss, and Eric Schmidt, according to an [Institute for Energy Research database](#) of tax filings spanning more than a decade.

The data show that, between 2008 and 2018, the groups have received nearly \$163 million from such pass-through organizations. The dataset doesn’t include tax filings from 2019-2022, the most recent years with publicly available tax information.

According to the data, the Bloomberg Family Foundation has given at least \$5.83 million to the NRDC, Steyer’s TomKat Foundation has given another \$3 million to the NRDC, the Wyss Foundation has given \$2.2 million total to the NRDC and Earthjustice, and the Schmidt Family Foundation has given \$5.5 million to the NRDC and Earthjustice.

A spokeswoman for the Wyss Foundation noted in a statement its most recent grants to the NRDC and Earthjustice came in 2014, and were directed to support those groups’ public lands advocacy.

The MacArthur Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, and William Penn Foundation have separately funneled tens of millions of dollars more to ACEEE, NRDC, Earthjustice, and the National Consumer Law Center.

“These groups are entirely focused on energy efficiency and damned to the rest of it,” said Alliance for Consumers executive director O.H. Skinner.

“It’s really offensive to watch them tell consumers that these choices should be forced on them and that energy efficiency is the only consideration,” Skinner continued. “In one set of agencies, these activists are pushing to ban products in the name of energy efficiency—squeeze dishwashers, squeeze gas stoves. Then, on the other hand, you have agencies that are aggressively pushing energy agendas that are going to drive up the price of electricity.”

One other group that joined the stakeholder recommendations was the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM), a group that represents makers of home appliances.

While AHAM has pushed back on many of the Biden administration's actions on appliances, it said it joined the coalition to allow companies to continue manufacturing their products.

"AHAM worked with other groups—energy, consumer and state entities—to present a joint recommendation to DOE on an entire package of product standards, rather than addressing each separately, because it allows industry to keep delivering high performing, fully-featured and affordable products to homes across the country," AHAM spokeswoman Jill Notini said.

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