

KATE M. HARPER, MEMBER

HARRISBURG OFFICE:  
210 RYAN OFFICE BUILDING  
PO BOX 202061  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2061  
PHONE: (717) 787-2801  
FAX: (717) 787-2022

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
1515 DEKALB PIKE, SUITE 106  
BLUE BELL, PA 19422  
PHONE: (610) 277-3230  
FAX: (610) 270-1677

E-MAIL: [kharper@pahousegop.com](mailto:kharper@pahousegop.com)  
[www.KateHarper.net](http://www.KateHarper.net)



*House of Representatives*  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

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# MEMO

**Date:** January 6, 2011  
**To:** All Members of the House of Representatives  
**From:** Representative Kate M. Harper  
61<sup>st</sup> Legislative District  
**Subject:** Co-sponsorship of Legislation – High Performance or “Green” Buildings

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When we build a new government building in this Commonwealth, we expect it to serve present and future generations. These are not buildings with a short "shelf life," and they should be designed for long term efficiency and performance. Energy costs must be a part of this equation, both for the long term success of the project and for the part the Commonwealth must play in our country's energy independence.

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation that would require the design, construction, and renovation of state-owned or leased buildings receiving state funding to be built using high performance standards. These types of buildings, commonly referred to as Green Buildings, are constructed to comply with a variety of energy efficient and environmentally sound techniques and practices.

This legislation is similar to House Bill 116 and HB 444. This legislation would require the application of high performance building construction standards to be applied in instances where:

- a state-owned new building construction project is larger than 10,000 gross square feet.
- a new construction project that is larger than 10,000 square feet of which a Commonwealth agency has agreed to lease no fewer than 90% of the gross square feet.

This proposed legislation would require a minimum set of criteria for the high performance buildings standards to be used to ensure compliance. These would include being consensus based, employ third-party post construction review and verification, and have a track record of certified green buildings in the United States. Additionally, projects would have to achieve, an United State Environmental Protection Agency Energy Star Program rating of 85 or above.

My proposed legislation would:

1. Expand the definition of a Commonwealth Agency to include state-related institutions, the Unified Judicial System and the General Assembly;
2. Clearly define a building project to include design, construction, or renovation of any structure;
3. Clarify the types of data to be reported in assessing the programs benefits;
4. Amend the manner in which the provisions of the legislation would apply to design and construction contracts.

I believe that it is important to deploy energy efficient and environmentally sound buildings throughout the Commonwealth. This will not only help to reduce the Commonwealth's energy costs, but will allow Pennsylvania to serve as a leader in the use of high performance building techniques – leading to more widespread adoption of these environmentally sound principles.

If you are interested in joining me as a co-sponsor, please contact Erin Raub at 787-2801 or via email at [eraub@pahousegop.com](mailto:eraub@pahousegop.com)