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San Francisco Passes Landmark Building Energy Efficiency Ordinance

WASHINGTON, DC, Feb. 10, 2011 – The San Francisco Board of Supervisors on Tuesday [voted unanimously](#) to pass the Existing Commercial Buildings Energy Performance Ordinance, requiring energy audits and annual ENERGY STAR benchmarking and public disclosure for existing commercial buildings. Building on a California state benchmarking law, the ordinance goes further by requiring non-residential buildings 10,000 square feet or larger to annually benchmark and disclose energy performance to the public, and to have a detailed energy audit including recommendations for energy efficiency improvements conducted every five years.

San Francisco's new ordinance is based on similar requirement [passed in New York City](#) in 2009, as part of Mayor Bloomberg's Greener, Greater Buildings Plan. The San Francisco ordinance, expected to be signed into law by Mayor Ed Lee, will be phased in through 2013. California's state law, which requires energy performance benchmarking and disclosure at the time of lease, sale, or financing, will go into effect later this year.

Statement of Cliff Majersik, Executive Director of the Institute for Market Transformation:

We applaud San Francisco for passing this significant building efficiency measure. Clearly, this is a growing trend among [leading U.S. jurisdictions](#). San Francisco is building on the great work of places like New York City and Washington, DC, and taking rating and disclosure to the next level, raising the bar for energy efficiency transparency in commercial buildings and leading the way for other cities and states.

In 2010, buildings consumed 75 percent of all electricity in the United States, and carried an energy price tag of more than \$420 billion. In inefficient buildings, much of that energy and cost is literally going out the window. Building owners are often unaware of how their building is performing, and they can't manage what they don't measure. Rating and disclosure of energy performance in buildings, paired with comprehensive energy audits which recommend cost-effective efficiency measures, is the first step in helping building owners recognize and capitalize on the energy and money-saving opportunities available to them.

Public disclosure of energy ratings helps increase transparency in the market, and allows investors, tenants and lenders to make informed decisions about energy consumption. This legislation will greatly increase the energy efficiency of San Francisco's commercial building stock, lowering energy costs, saving consumers money, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and creating green jobs.

See the San Francisco Department of Environment [press release](#).

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR MARKET TRANSFORMATION

The Institute for Market Transformation (IMT) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of energy efficiency, green building and environmental protection in the United States and abroad. Our activities include technical and market research, educational outreach, and the crafting of building codes and other policy and program initiatives. Much of IMT's work addresses market failures that inhibit investment in efficiency and green buildings. For more information, visit www.imt.org.