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PIMA Praises President Obama's 'Better Buildings Initiative' for Enhanced Energy Efficiency Programs

Association notes significant annual energy savings result from retrofit, High-R Roofs

Bethesda, MD, February 4, 2011 – The Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association (PIMA) offers its strong support of President Obama's recently announced Better Buildings Initiative, a multipronged effort to make commercial buildings 20 percent more energy efficient over the next decade by encouraging private sector investment through incentives to upgrade schools, universities and municipal facilities, as well as offices, stores, and other commercial buildings.

"The Better Buildings Initiative is about taking small steps to reach larger goals," said Jared Blum, President of PIMA. "The President's plan is a serious proposal to deal with this country's large universe of existing commercial buildings, a large percentage of which were built before any model or national energy codes were adopted."

The explicit goals of the plan include achieving a 20 percent improvement in energy efficiency by 2020, offsetting the cost of electricity by roughly \$40 billion per year for businesses and landlords, and saving energy by reforming outdated incentives and challenging the private sector to act.

President Obama outlines several steps to reach these goals, which include:

- Providing new, workable tax incentives to encourage building efficiency
- Offering more financing opportunities for commercial retrofits
- Proposing new competitive grants to states and/or local governments that streamline standards, encourage upgrades and attract private sector investment
- A pilot program allowing the Department of Energy to guarantee private loans for energy efficiency upgrades at hospitals, schools and other buildings
- Challenging CEOs and University presidents to move toward energy efficiency
- Training the next generation of commercial building technology workers

A significant opportunity to increase building energy efficiency lies within the commercial roofing sector, where over 50 billion square feet of flat roofs are currently available for retrofit, 4 billion of which are retrofitted each year. If the insulation levels in these commercial roofs were upgraded from their current R-value to the high performance levels embodied in a High R Roof – 50 percent above the minimum required values – annual energy savings would exceed \$2 billion.

"One of the best and simplest ways to achieve a high degree of energy efficiency is by increasing the levels of insulation on the roof," Blum added. "There is a tremendous opportunity to significantly accelerate efficiency and save money in the retrofit market. Insulation, through its consistent and persistent performance, remains one of the most important components in a reroofing project when it comes to reducing energy costs and carbon footprint."

Last year, commercial buildings consumed nearly 20 percent of all energy in the United States, and improving the efficiency of these buildings can create jobs, stimulate the economy, save money and decrease the nation's carbon footprint.

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About PIMA

For over 20 years, the Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association (PIMA) has served as the unified voice of the rigid polyiso industry proactively advocating for safe, cost-effective, sustainable and energy efficient construction. PIMA's members, who first came together in 1987, include a synergistic partnership of polyiso manufacturers and industry suppliers. Polyiso is one of the nation's most widely used and cost-effective insulation products available. To learn more visit www.polyiso.org.

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