

Energy Efficiency Bills in the House

As the House Energy and Commerce Committee works on a comprehensive energy package, there has been a significant number of energy-related bills introduced for consideration. Among these bills are a number that deal primarily with energy efficiency and brief outlines for those specific bills are provided below.

The Bills

H.R. 504 – Energy Program Integrity Act

This bill was introduced by Representative Rob Latta (R-Oh.), with bipartisan support, and amends part of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to add that any disclosure related to voluntary participation in the Energy Star program does not provide a warranty for a product, nor does it give rise to any private claims or rights of action under the law relating to a product being disqualified from Energy Star, given certain requirements.

H.R. 568 – Thermal Insulation Efficiency Improvement Act

Introduced by Representative Kinzinger (R-Ill.) and co-sponsored by Representative McNerney (D-Calif.), this bill would require the Department of Energy to submit a report on the impact of thermal insulation on energy and water systems for hot and chilled water in federal buildings, including a summary of energy and water savings and projected savings, and an analysis of cost-savings and the return on investment for installing insulation.

H.R. 756 – Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act of 2015

H.R. 756 was introduced by Representative Cartwright (D-Pa.), with several co-sponsors and bipartisan support. This bill amends the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to direct the Department of Energy's Office of Energy and Renewable Energy to create an agency or entity for the dissemination of information on available programs and financing options that promote energy efficiency, distributed generation, and energy retrofitting projects in schools.

H.R. 873 – Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2015

Introduced by Representative McKinley (R-W.V.) and co-sponsored by Representative Welch (D-Vt.), this bill requires the General Services Administration to develop model leasing provisions to promote cost-effective energy and water efficiency measures in commercial buildings, and policies and best practices to implement the measures in realty services provided by the GSA to federal agencies. This bill also amends the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to require that each federal agency develop a plan to implement energy-efficient information technologies and that the Department of Energy maintain a data center energy practitioner certification program, as well as an initiative to make information on federal data energy usage accessible.

H.R. 906 – To modify the efficiency standards of grid-enabled water heaters

This bill was introduced by Representative Whitfield (R-Ky.) with bipartisan support. It amends the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, by adding further energy conservation standards for grid-enabled water heaters that are part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program and requires reports from manufacturers and utilities on the amount of water heaters used in such programs, in order to determine the efficacy and necessity of the added standards.

H.R. 1005 – Renewable Energy Jobs Act

H.R. 1005 was introduced by Representative Ruiz (D-Ca), with other Democrat co-sponsors, and provides for the creation of a pilot program that awards grants to States to train workers for careers in the renewable energy and energy efficiency industries. Grants will be awarded to the five states with the highest installed alternative energy power capacity.

H.R. 1268 – Energy Efficient Government Technology Act

Introduced by Representative Eshoo (D-Ca), and several bipartisan co-sponsors, this bill amends the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to require that each federal agency develop a plan for the implementation of energy-efficient information technologies. It also requires that the Secretary and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency work with stakeholders from the information technology industry and the Office of Management and Budget to maintain a data center energy practitioner certification program, as well an initiative to make information on federal data energy usage accessible.

H.R. 1273 – Energy Savings and Buildings Efficiency Act of 2015

This bill, introduced by Representative Blackburn (R-Tn.) and Representative Schrader (D-Or.), specifies how states, Indian tribes, and local governments must review and update the energy provisions of their building codes, in accordance with model building energy codes, and certify compliance with these updated codes or the model codes. The bill also provides for the Secretary of Energy to award grants to institutions of higher education for the creation of building training and assessment centers.

H.R. 1629 – Energy Savings Through Public-Private Partnerships Act of 2015

This bill was introduced by Representative Kinzinger (R-Ill.) and bipartisan co-sponsors. It amends the National Energy Conservation Policy Act to further promote the use of performance contracting in federal facilities.

H.R. 1630 – Utility Energy Service Contracts Improvement Act of 2015

This bill was introduced by Representative Kinzinger (R-Ill.) and co-sponsor Representative Welch (D-Vt.). It amends the National Energy Conservation Policy Act to allow federal agencies to use utility energy service contracts and other measures to achieve energy efficiency and conservation mandates. It also stipulates that utility energy service contracts entered into by federal agencies

may have a contract period that exceeds 10 years, but not 25, and must include requirements for measurement, verification, and performance or savings guarantees.

H.R. 1802 – Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2015

Introduced by Representative McKinley (R-W.V.), and co-sponsor Representative Welch (D-Vt), this bill directs the Administrator of General Services, with the Secretary of Energy, to develop model commercial leasing provisions related to investments in water and energy efficiency measures. It also mandates a study on the impacts of implementing high-performance energy efficiency measures in “separate spaces” in commercial buildings, and the establishment of a Tenant Star program to promote energy efficiency in separate spaces for commercial buildings. Further, the bill amends the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to create additional standards for grid-enabled water heaters and amends the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to change requirements for benchmarking and disclosure for leasing buildings without Energy Star labels.

H.R. 1806 – America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015

Introduced by Representative Smith (R-Tx), and other Republican co-sponsors, this bill intends to promote technological innovation, scientific discovery, and the competitiveness of the U.S. workforce by prioritizing government investment in scientific research and research infrastructure, as well as STEM education and career training.

H.R. 1867 – To encourage benchmarking and disclosure of energy information for commercial buildings

Representative Castor (D-Fl) introduced H.R. 1867 with co-sponsor Representative Kinzinger (R-Ill.). This bill amends the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, specifically requirements of benchmarking and disclosure for leasing buildings without Energy Star labels. The bill also commissions a study on the impacts of state and local performance benchmarking and disclosure policies, associated building efficiency policies for commercial and multifamily buildings, and utilities programs and systems that provide data on energy consumption, in order to identify best practice policies. Finally, the bill also provides for the creation of a database for storing and making publically accessible energy-related information on commercial and multifamily buildings.

H.R. 1980 – E-Access Act

This bill was introduced by Representative Welch (D-Vt.) and co-sponsored by Representative Cartwright (D-Pa). It amends the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to authorize state energy conservation programs that enhance consumer access to energy usage and price information and allow for the development and adoption of innovative products and services to assist consumers in managing energy consumption and expenditures. The bill also directs the Secretary of Energy to issue voluntary guidelines or standards for states to implement electric energy information access policies and allows states to submit a description of their data accessibility policies so that DOE may certify that they meet the voluntary guidelines.

H.R. 2073 – Home Owner Managing Energy Savings (HOMES) Act of 2015

This bill, introduced by Representative McKinley (R-W.V.) and co-sponsored by Representative Welch (D-Vt.), directs the Secretary of Energy to establish the Home Energy Savings Retrofit Rebate Program and a network of rebate aggregators to facilitate the delivery of rebates to participating homeowners or contractors. The bill establishes requirements and guidelines for retrofits to qualify rebates, which include 20-40% reductions in energy use, and requirements for participating contractors and quality assurance.

H.R. 2132 – To require the Secretary of Energy to establish an energy efficiency retrofit pilot program

Introduced by Representative Cartwright (D-Pa.) with bipartisan support, this bill mandates the creation of an energy efficiency retrofit pilot program for nonprofit buildings, including hospitals, schools, and social welfare program facilities, among others. The Secretary of Energy will award grants to retrofitting projects based on their cost-effectiveness, energy savings, financial need, and plans for evaluation, measurement, and verification of these savings.

H.R. 2158 – To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the credit for energy-efficient existing homes

This bill, introduced by Representative Grayson (D-Fl.), amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 by extending the tax credit for existing energy-efficient homes from December 31st, 2014 to December 31st, 2015.

H.R. 2159 – To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the credit for energy-efficient new homes

This bill, introduced by Representative Grayson (D-Fl.) amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 by extending the tax credit for new energy-efficient homes from December 31st, 2014 to December 31st, 2015.

H.R. 2177 – Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act of 2015

H.R. 2177 was introduced by Representative McKinley (R-W.V.) and co-sponsored by Representative Welch (D-Vt.) and Representative Cartwright (D-Pa.). This bill covers several areas in energy efficiency, including buildings efficiency, and it mandates the updating of state building energy efficiency codes and model building energy codes, grants to institutions of higher education for the creation of career training and assessment centers focused on buildings efficiency, retrofitting assistance for schools, a Tenant Star program, and changes to requirements of benchmarking and disclosure for leasing buildings without Energy Star labels. It also contains provisions related to expanding industrial energy efficiency programs and rebates in the Department of Energy and other federal agencies. In addition, this bill requires the implementation of energy-efficient information technologies in federal agencies, as well as energy efficient data centers. Regulatory provisions contained in this bill include third-party certification for the Energy Star program, additional standards for grid-enabled water heaters, energy performance

requirements for federal buildings, and voluntary verification programs for cooling and heating appliances.

H.R. 2245 – To require the Federal Trade Commission to consider including Smart Grid capability on Energy Guide labels for products

Introduced by Representative Ellmers (R-N.C.), and co-sponsored by Representative McNerney (D-Ca.), this bill amends the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to add a special note on Energy Guide labels for products that include Smart Grid capabilities.

H.R. 2296 – To establish a Financing Energy Efficient Manufacturing Program in the Department of Energy to provide financial assistance to promote energy efficiency and onsite renewable technologies in manufacturing and industrial facilities.

Introduced by Representative Cartwright (D-Pa.) and several other Democrat co-sponsors, this bill aims to promote the deployment of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies in manufacturing and industrial facilities through the creation of a Financing Energy Efficient Manufacturing Program. States may apply for a grant to establish or expand a program as part of the Financing Energy Efficient Manufacturing Program, and are chosen on the likelihood that programs will increase the total investment and energy savings of retrofit projects to be supported.