

The Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act of 2017 (S. 385 / H.R. 1443)

Construction Employers of America (CEA) Position:

The Construction Employers of America supports Congress passing comprehensive energy legislation in the 115th Congress. S. 385 is a bipartisan energy package sponsored by Senators Rob Portman (R – OH) and Jeanne Shaheen (D – NH) with 10 cosponsors, and H. R. 1443, its bipartisan House companion bill, sponsored by Representative David McKinley (R-WV) and Peter Welch (D-VT) with 4 cosponsors.

The Issue:

After nearly a decade of debate and gridlock, Congress is off to a fast start toward passing significant energy bills to increase efficiency of our energy system for the commercial, industrial, residential, and public sector facilities. According to the Energy Information Agency, the combined annual energy costs for U.S. commercial buildings and industrial facilities total more than \$200 billion, and more than 30 percent of a building's energy use is inefficient or wasted. The industrial sector uses over 30 percent of all energy consumed in the U.S.—more than any other sector—and leads all efficiency opportunities with 40 percent of cost-effective energy efficiency potential in the U.S. economy achievable by 2020.

Inefficiencies in residential and commercial buildings account for more than 40 percent of the total U.S. energy consumption and 40 percent of the total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, with commercial buildings in many major cities accounting for most carbon emissions. Energy security is central to national security. Changes in Building Codes and increased industrial efficiency, and increased efficiency efforts in government buildings, would do much to reduce US energy consumption. Deployment of energy efficiency technologies and facilities would create more jobs and would help commercial, industrial and manufacturers slash energy operation costs to become more globally competitive.

After a delay of nearly a decade due to gridlock over the battle for a comprehensive energy policy, a successful outcome to this debate this year cannot be underestimated.

Key Points:

The Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act of 2017 (S. 385 / H.R. 1443) advances

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the following national energy and efficiency goals:

- Incentivize the nation’s industrial sector (**Title II**) to adopt currently available technologies (motors, transformers, etc.) and processes that will speed up manufacturing supply, productivity, and energy efficiency;
- Encourage the nation’s number one energy consumer—the government (**Title III**)—to lead the way to adopt many new efficient technology programs to reduce data center energy consumption, benchmark the public building inventory for retrofit planning and smarter public school operation;
- Create new incentives to broaden use of commercially available products and approaches that will lower energy consumption and costs for buildings (**Title I**) for manufacturers, commercial tenants and consumers.
- Would establish a DOE program - Supply STAR – to improve the efficiency of the supply chain for manufacturing sector firms;
- Support public-private R&D and commercialization efforts aimed at speeding up development of next-generation energy-efficient technologies;
- Reinforce private sector participation in a consensus-driven approach to strengthening energy standards and building codes nationwide. S. 385 / H.R. 1443 would also support the university-based training of the next generation of workers in energy efficient commercial building design and operations.

Status:

S. 385 was sponsored by Senators Rob Portman (R – OH) and Jeanne Shaheen (D – NH), and H. R. 1443, its House companion bill, was sponsored by Representatives David McKinley (R-WV) and Peter Welch (D-VT).

S. 385 was reported favorably without amendment from the Energy and Natural Resources on March 30th and awaits Senate floor action.

H.R. 1443 was introduced on March 9th and is pending action in the House Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management.

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