S. 886 – Smart Energy and Water Efficiency Act of 2015

The Smart Energy and Water Efficiency Act of 2015 (S. 886) was introduced in the U.S. Senate by Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) on March 26, 2015. Most recently, these provisions were included in Section 4102 of S. 2012, the Senate's comprehensive energy bill. A similar bill (H.R. 3143) was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Jerry McNerney (D-Calif.) on July 21, 2015. Alliance Honorary Board Member Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-Ill.) is a co-sponsor, and most recently, it was included in Section 3161 of H.R. 8, the House's comprehensive energy bill.

Summary

This bill would amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 by requiring the Secretary of Energy to establish and carry out a smart energy and water efficiency pilot program. The purpose of the program is to award grants to eligible entities to demonstrate novel and innovative technology-based solutions that perform at least one of the following functions:

- increase the energy efficiency of water, wastewater, and water reuse systems;
- improve the energy efficiency of these systems to help communities across the U.S. make significant progress in conserving water, saving energy, and reducing costs; and
- help implement innovative processes and installation of advanced automated systems that provide real-time data on energy and water.

Key Provisions

The Secretary would make competitive, merit-reviewed grants available to 3-5 eligible entities, chosen based on elements such as energy and cost savings, the novelty of the technology to be used, and the technology's ability to be deployed in a variety of geographic regions on smaller or larger scales, among other elements. The Secretary would provide technical and policy assistance to grant recipients if requested. The Secretary would also annually evaluate each project that receives a grant, assessing the progress and impact of the project and the degree to which the project is meeting the goals of the pilot program.