

STREAMLINING ENERGY EFFICIENCY FOR SCHOOLS ACT OF 2013

Senator Mark Udall (D-Colo.) and Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) introduced the Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act (S. 1084) on June 3, 2013. This legislation would simplify the scope of existing federal energy efficiency programs available to schools, and provide clearer guidance on financing options. The bill was referred to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Summary

This legislation would amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act and restructure existing energy retrofit resources offered to schools by designating the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) as the lead agency for coordinating programs and disseminating information. After reviewing all relevant standing programs and financing mechanisms offered by federal agencies, EERE would coordinate educational and outreach efforts to promote available federal opportunities for assistance.

The Office would be authorized to afford technical assistance to states, local educational agencies, and schools to help develop and finance energy efficiency projects. EERE would also be required to cultivate and maintain an online database for relevant technical assistance and support staff. Schools that successfully implement energy retrofit projects would be recognized for their achievements.

EERE would be directed to submit an implementation plan within 180 days of the enactment of S. 1084.

Impacts

The Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act would not only encourage schools to be more energy efficient, but it would also help school districts cut costs and ensure that funds are available for more useful and educational purposes. K-12 school districts currently spend billions on their energy bills each year, and although there are a variety of programs to help reduce costs, it is difficult for school administrators to navigate all of their options. By improving the effectiveness and awareness of federal energy efficiency programs for schools, this legislation would afford school officials the ability to reduce energy waste and realize the economic and environmental benefits of energy efficiency.

The full text of S. 1084 is available at <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/s1084/text>

"The Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act will provide schools across this country with the assistance they need to fully realize the savings potential of investments in energy efficiency. We firmly believe that one of the most effective ways we can relieve the fiscal pressure felt by school boards across this country is to end energy waste in school facilities, which in turn will free up funding for more useful purposes while simultaneously improving the environment."

-Kateri Callahan, President of the Alliance to Save Energy