

WEATHERIZATION ENHANCEMENT AND LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY INVESTMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Alliance to Save Energy Vice-Chairs Senators Chris Coons (D-Del.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) joined Senator Jack Reed (D-R.I.) to introduce the [Weatherization Enhancement and Local Energy Efficiency Investment and Accountability Act \(S. 1213\)](#) on June 21, 2013. This legislation, which has been referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, would reauthorize and improve the Weatherization and State Energy Programs.

Summary

S. 1213 maintains appropriate resources for both the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and the State Energy Program (SEP), two programs that have been consistently and regularly reauthorized on a bipartisan basis. WAP has weatherized more than one million homes for low-income families, seniors, and individuals with disabilities since April of 2009, and reauthorizing the program for the next five years will ensure that more Americans are able to reduce their energy consumption and save money.

This legislation also introduces a complementary innovation initiative to leverage private funding for weatherization projects. Non-profit organizations with a track record of success will be eligible for DOE grants to supplement their existing private sector or volunteer resources. This initiative would increase the reach of limited federal funds to help even more families save energy in their homes.

Additionally, the measure would create minimum professional standards for WAP contractors and workers, and instruct grant recipients to provide certification and training opportunities for their employees. The bill would also establish an independent quality assurance program for houses weatherized under WAP.

Impact

The Weatherization Enhancement and Local Energy Efficiency Investment and Accountability Act would build upon the past successes of WAP and SEP while also modernizing the programs to adapt to the current challenges. For over 35 years, the Weatherization Assistance Program has helped low-income Americans reduce their energy costs by investing in energy efficiency. The updates to the program contained in S. 1213 would continue this important weatherization work and increase the reach of federal funds, helping even more Americans invest in energy efficiency to save money on their utility bills.

Key Provisions of S. 1213

- Reauthorize the program through 2018
- Develop a complementary, competitive grant program for non-profits with a history of success
- Require minimum professional standards for WAP workers and contractors
- Establish an independent quality assurance program