

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2536

To provide for grants for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy improvements at public school facilities.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 18, 2017

Mr. LOEBACK introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To provide for grants for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy improvements at public school facilities.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Renew America’s
5 Schools Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. GRANTS FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS**

7 **AND RENEWABLE ENERGY IMPROVEMENTS**

8 **AT PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES.**

9 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
2 ty” means a consortium of—

3 (A) one local educational agency; and

4 (B) one or more—

5 (i) schools;

6 (ii) nonprofit organizations;

7 (iii) for-profit organizations; or

8 (iv) community partners that have the
9 knowledge and capacity to partner and as-
10 sist with energy improvements.

11 (2) ENERGY IMPROVEMENTS.—The term “en-
12 ergy improvements” means—

13 (A) any improvement, repair, or renova-
14 tion, to a school that will result in a direct re-
15 duction in school energy costs including but not
16 limited to improvements to building envelope,
17 air conditioning, ventilation, heating system, do-
18 mestic hot water heating, compressed air sys-
19 tems, distribution systems, lighting, power sys-
20 tems and controls;

21 (B) any improvement, repair, renovation,
22 or installation that leads to an improvement in
23 teacher and student health including but not
24 limited to indoor air quality, daylighting, ven-
25 tilation, electrical lighting, and acoustics; and

1 (C) the installation of renewable energy
2 technologies (such as wind power, photovoltaics,
3 solar thermal systems, geothermal energy, hy-
4 drogen-fueled systems, biomass-based systems,
5 biofuels, anaerobic digesters, and hydropower)
6 involved in the improvement, repair, or renova-
7 tion to a school.

8 (b) AUTHORITY.—From amounts made available for
9 grants under this section, the Secretary of Energy shall
10 provide competitive grants to eligible entities to make en-
11 ergy improvements authorized by this section.

12 (c) PRIORITY.—In making grants under this sub-
13 section, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities
14 that have renovation, repair, and improvement funding
15 needs and are—

16 (1) a high-need local educational agency, as de-
17 fined in section 2102 of the Elementary and Sec-
18 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6602); or

19 (2) a local educational agency designated with
20 a metrocentric locale code of 41, 42, or 43 as deter-
21 mined by the National Center for Education Statis-
22 tics (NCES), in conjunction with the Bureau of the
23 Census, using the NCES system for classifying local
24 educational agencies.

1 (d) COMPETITIVE CRITERIA.—The competitive cri-
2 teria used by the Secretary shall include the following:

3 (1) The fiscal capacity of the eligible entity to
4 meet the needs for improvements of school facilities
5 without assistance under this section, including the
6 ability of the eligible entity to raise funds through
7 the use of local bonding capacity and otherwise.

8 (2) The likelihood that the local educational
9 agency or eligible entity will maintain, in good condi-
10 tion, any facility whose improvement is assisted.

11 (3) The potential energy efficiency and safety
12 benefits from the proposed energy improvements.

13 (e) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant
14 under this section, an applicant must submit to the Sec-
15 retary an application that includes each of the following:

16 (1) A needs assessment of the current condition
17 of the school and facilities that are to receive the en-
18 ergy improvements.

19 (2) A draft work plan of what the applicant
20 hopes to achieve at the school and a description of
21 the energy improvements to be carried out.

22 (3) A description of the applicant's capacity to
23 provide services and comprehensive support to make
24 the energy improvements.

1 (4) An assessment of the applicant's expected
2 needs for operation and maintenance training funds,
3 and a plan for use of those funds, if any.

4 (5) An assessment of the expected energy effi-
5 ciency and safety benefits of the energy improve-
6 ments.

7 (6) A cost estimate of the proposed energy im-
8 provements.

9 (7) An identification of other resources that are
10 available to carry out the activities for which funds
11 are requested under this section, including the avail-
12 ability of utility programs and public benefit funds.

13 (f) USE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The recipient of a grant
15 under this section shall use the grant amounts only
16 to make the energy improvements contemplated in
17 the application, subject to the other provisions of
18 this subsection.

19 (2) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE TRAIN-
20 ING.—The recipient may use up to 5 percent for op-
21 eration and maintenance training for energy effi-
22 ciency and renewable energy improvements (such as
23 maintenance staff and teacher training, education,
24 and preventative maintenance training).

1 (3) AUDIT.—The recipient may use funds for a
2 third-party investigation and analysis for energy im-
3 provements (such as energy audits and existing
4 building commissioning).

5 (4) CONTINUING EDUCATION.—The recipient
6 may use up to 1 percent of the grant amounts to de-
7 velop a continuing education curriculum relating to
8 energy improvements.

9 (g) CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS.—

10 (1) DAVIS-BACON.—Any laborer or mechanic
11 employed by any contractor or subcontractor in the
12 performance of work on any energy improvements
13 funded by a grant under this section shall be paid
14 wages at rates not less than those prevailing on
15 similar construction in the locality as determined by
16 the Secretary of Labor under subchapter IV of chap-
17 ter 31 of title 40, United States Code (commonly re-
18 ferred to as the Davis-Bacon Act).

19 (2) COMPETITION.—Each applicant that re-
20 ceives funds shall ensure that, if the applicant car-
21 ries out repair or renovation through a contract, any
22 such contract process—

23 (A) ensures the maximum number of quali-
24 fied bidders, including small, minority, and

1 women-owned businesses, through full and open
2 competition; and

3 (B) gives priority to businesses located in,
4 or resources common to, the State or the geo-
5 graphical area in which the project is carried
6 out.

7 (h) REPORTING.—Each recipient of a grant under
8 this section shall submit to the Secretary, at such time
9 as the Secretary may require, a report describing the use
10 of such funds for energy improvements, the estimated cost
11 savings realized by those energy improvements, the results
12 of any audit, the use of any utility programs and public
13 benefit funds and the use of performance tracking for en-
14 ergy improvements (such as the Department of Energy:
15 Energy Star program or LEED for Existing Buildings).

16 (i) BEST PRACTICES.—The Secretary shall develop
17 and publish guidelines and best practices for activities car-
18 ried out under this section.

19 (j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
20 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
21 \$100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 through 2023.

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