

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1183

To establish an energy storage and microgrid grant and technical assistance program.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 11, 2019

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. MORAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To establish an energy storage and microgrid grant and technical assistance program.

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 “Expanding Access to
5 Sustainable Energy Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

8 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
9 ty” means—

10 (A) a rural electric cooperative; and

1 (B) two or more rural electric cooperatives
2 working together.

3 (2) ENERGY STORAGE.—The term “energy
4 storage” means the use of a system, equipment, fa-
5 cility, or technology that—

6 (A) is capable of absorbing energy, storing
7 that energy for a period of time, and dis-
8 patching the stored energy; and

9 (B)(i) uses a mechanical, electrochemical,
10 or thermal process to store energy that—

11 (I) was generated at an earlier time
12 for use at a later time; or

13 (II) was generated from a mechanical
14 process, and would otherwise be wasted,
15 for delivery at a later time; or

16 (ii) stores thermal energy for direct use for
17 heating or cooling at a later time in a manner
18 that avoids the need to use electricity at that
19 later time, in the same manner as the storage
20 and use offered by a grid-enabled water heater.

21 (3) ISLAND.—The term “island”, with respect
22 to a distributed generator or energy storage equip-
23 ment, means that the generator or equipment con-
24 tinues to power a location in the absence of electric
25 power from a primary source.

1 (4) MICROGRID.—The term “microgrid” means
2 an interconnected system of loads and distributed
3 energy resources, including generators and energy
4 storage devices, within clearly defined electrical
5 boundaries that—

6 (A) acts as a single controllable entity with
7 respect to the grid; and

8 (B) can connect and disconnect from the
9 grid to operate in both grid-connected mode
10 and island mode.

11 (5) RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCE.—The term
12 “renewable energy source” has the meaning given
13 the term in section 609(a) of the Public Utility Reg-
14 ulatory Policies Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 918c(a)).

15 (6) RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE.—The term
16 “rural electric cooperative” means an electric coop-
17 erative (as defined in section 3 of the Federal Power
18 Act (16 U.S.C. 796)) that sells electric energy to
19 persons in rural areas.

20 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
21 the Secretary of Energy.

1 **SEC. 3. ENERGY STORAGE AND MICROGRID ASSISTANCE**
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
4 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish
5 a program under which the Secretary shall—

6 (1) provide grants to eligible entities under sub-
7 section (c);

8 (2) provide technical assistance to eligible enti-
9 ties under subsection (d); and

10 (3) disseminate information to eligible entities
11 on—

12 (A) the activities described in subsections
13 (c)(1) and (d); and

14 (B) potential and existing energy storage
15 and microgrid projects.

16 (b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The Secretary may
17 enter into a cooperative agreement with an eligible entity
18 to carry out subsection (a).

19 (c) GRANTS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
21 grants to eligible entities for identifying, evaluating,
22 and designing energy storage and microgrid projects
23 that rely on energy from renewable energy sources.

24 (2) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a
25 grant under paragraph (1), an eligible entity shall
26 submit to the Secretary an application at such time,

1 in such manner, and containing such information as
2 the Secretary may require.

3 (3) USE OF GRANT.—An eligible entity that re-
4 ceives a grant under paragraph (1)—

5 (A) shall use the grant—

6 (i) to conduct feasibility studies to as-
7 sess the potential for implementation or
8 improvement of energy storage or micro-
9 grid projects;

10 (ii) to analyze and implement strate-
11 gies to overcome barriers to energy storage
12 or microgrid project implementation, in-
13 cluding financial, contracting, siting, and
14 permitting barriers;

15 (iii) to conduct detailed engineering of
16 energy storage or microgrid projects;

17 (iv) to perform a cost-benefit analysis
18 with respect to an energy storage or micro-
19 grid project; and

20 (v) to plan for both the short- and
21 long-term inclusion of energy storage or
22 microgrid projects into the future develop-
23 ment plans of the eligible entity; and

24 (B) may use the grant to obtain technical
25 assistance from experts in carrying out the ac-

1 activities described in clauses (i) through (v) of
2 subparagraph (A).

3 (4) **CONDITION.**—As a condition of receiving a
4 grant under paragraph (1), an eligible entity shall—

5 (A) implement a public awareness cam-
6 paign about the project implemented under the
7 grant in the community in which the eligible en-
8 tity is located; and

9 (B) submit to the Secretary, and make
10 available to the public, a report that de-
11 scribes—

12 (i) any energy cost savings and envi-
13 ronmental benefits achieved under the
14 project; and

15 (ii) the results of the project, includ-
16 ing quantitative assessments to the extent
17 practicable, associated with each activity
18 described in paragraph (3)(A).

19 (5) **COST-SHARE.**—Activities under this sub-
20 section shall be subject to the cost-sharing require-
21 ments of section 988 of the Energy Policy Act of
22 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16352).

23 (d) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry
2 out subsection (a)(2) by providing eligible entities
3 with technical assistance relating to—

4 (A) identifying opportunities for energy
5 storage and microgrid projects;

6 (B) understanding the technical and eco-
7 nomic characteristics of energy storage or
8 microgrid projects;

9 (C) understanding financing alternatives;

10 (D) permitting and siting issues;

11 (E) obtaining case studies of similar and
12 successful energy storage or microgrid projects;

13 (F) reviewing and obtaining computer soft-
14 ware for assessment, design, and operation and
15 maintenance of energy storage or microgrid sys-
16 tems; and

17 (G) understanding and utilizing the reli-
18 ability and resiliency benefits of energy storage
19 and microgrid projects.

20 (2) EXTERNAL CONTRACTS.—In carrying out
21 subsection (a)(2), the Secretary may enter into con-
22 tracts with third-party experts, including engineer-
23 ing, finance, and insurance experts, to provide tech-
24 nical assistance to eligible entities relating to the ac-
25 tivities described in subparagraphs (A) through (G)

1 of paragraph (1), or other relevant activities, as de-
2 termined by the Secretary.

3 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-
5 priated to carry out this Act \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal
6 years 2020 through 2025.

7 (b) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than 5 per-
8 cent of the amount appropriated under subsection (a) for
9 each fiscal year shall be used for administrative expenses.

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