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119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7977

To provide relief from high energy bills, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 18, 2026

Mr. CASTEN (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. ANSARI, Ms. BALINT, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. BELL, Mr. BEYER, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BROWNLEY, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Ms. BYNUM, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CASE, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK, Ms. CHU, Mr. CISNEROS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Ms. CRAIG, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DEXTER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. ELFRETH, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Mr. FROST, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mrs. GRIJALVA, Mr. HERNÁNDEZ, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JACOBS, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. LANDSMAN, Mr. LATIMER, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Ms. LEE of Nevada, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, Mr. LIEU, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MAGAZINER, Mr. MANNION, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCBRIDE, Mrs. MCCLAIN DELANEY, Ms. MCCLELLAN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MCDONALD RIVET, Mr. MCGARVEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MENEFEE, Ms. MENG, Mr. MFUME, Mr. MIN, Mr. MORELLE, Ms. MORRISON, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. MRVAN, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NEGUSE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mr. OLSZEWSKI, Ms. OMAR, Ms. PETTERSEN, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. RIVAS, Ms. ROSS, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. SALINAS, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. SIMON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SORENSEN, Ms. STANSBURY, Mr. STANTON, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. SUBRAMANYAM, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TITUS, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. TONKO, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mrs. TRAHAN, Mr. TRAN, Ms. UNDERWOOD, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VASQUEZ, Mr. VINDMAN, Mr. WALKINSHAW, Ms. WATERS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WHITESIDES, and Ms. WILSON of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Ways and Means, Natural Resources, Financial Services, Transportation and Infrastructure, Education and Workforce, Oversight and Government Reform, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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A BILL

To provide relief from high energy bills, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Energy Bills Relief Act".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

TITLE VII—COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITIES FOR SUCCESSFUL DEPLOYMENT

TITLE I—REVERSING ATTACKS ON LOW-COST, CLEAN ENERGY

Subtitle A—Restoring Tax Credits for Low-cost, Clean Energy

SEC. 101. REPEALING H.R. 1 ROLLBACKS OF LOW-COST, CLEAN ENERGY TAX CREDITS.

(a) REPEAL.—Subchapter A of chapter 5 of subtitle A of title VII of Public Law 119–21 is hereby repealed.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—Each provision of law amended by such subchapter is amended to read as such provision would read if such subchapter had never been enacted.

(c) EFFECTS.—Each amendment made by subsection (b) shall take effect as if included in the provision of such subchapter to which such amendment relates.

Subtitle B—Stopping Administration Overreach Against Low-Cost, Clean Energy

SEC. 111. REVERSING GRANT TERMINATIONS FOR LOW-COST, CLEAN ENERGY.

(a) The Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Transportation may not terminate a Federal award in part or its entirety, require a renegotiation or rescoping of the Federal award, or decide not to fund a future budget period of a Federal award on the basis that the Federal award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities, including pursuant to section 200.340(a)(4) of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) Any Federal award that was terminated, renegotiated, rescoped, or not progressed to future budget periods by the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, or the Department of Transportation after January 19, 2025, for no longer effectuating the program goals or agency priorities, including pursuant to section 200.340(a)(4) of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, shall be reinstated by such agency or entity under its previous terms and conditions.

SEC. 112. PREVENTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ABUSE OF FEDERAL PERMITTING OF LOW-COST, CLEAN ENERGY.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR PARITY.—The Council on Environmental Quality, in consultation with all applicable Federal agencies, shall ensure, via subsection (b), that the processing of applications, authorizations, or related approvals as well as denials and the activities referenced in subsection (g) for wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission projects on Federal and non-Federal land and waters is not subject to more restrictive or burdensome procedural requirements than those applied to applications for oil, gas, or coal projects on Federal and non-Federal land and waters and does not bias Federal decision making in favor of oil, gas, or coal projects, including—

(1) requirements for elevated or discretionary review by the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, other political appointees, or career employees;

(2) additional documentation or review not required for oil, gas, or coal projects;

(3) withholding, delaying, or reversing decisions by local or regional entities for wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission projects for reasons not applied to oil, gas or coal projects; and

(4) denial of routine administrative approvals, such as testing permits or cost recovery agreements, or notices to proceed once all criteria have been met for approval, based on underlying technology.

(b) POLICY REVIEW.—

(1) REVIEW.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Council on Environmental Quality, in consultation with all applicable Federal agencies, shall—

(A) review all applicable regulations, guidance documents, policy manuals, departmental directives, Secretarial orders, and other procedures regarding energy development; and

(B) identify any provision of such regulations, documents, manuals, directives, orders, and procedures not otherwise required in statute that do not comply with the requirements in subsection (a).

(2) RESCISSION.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this section, the applicable Secretary or Administrator shall rescind or amend as necessary any provision identified under subsection (a).

(c) ACCOUNTABILITY IN PERMITTING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section and annually thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on actions taken by all applicable Federal agencies related to permitting for energy projects, which shall include—

(1) an analysis of the procedures used by all applicable Federal agencies for processing applications, authorizations, or approvals for wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission projects on Federal and non-Federal land and waters and how those procedures compare to those used for oil, gas, or coal projects;

(2) an analysis of the number of days applicable Federal agencies took during the previous calendar year to process applications, authorizations or approvals for wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission projects on Federal and non-Federal land and waters compared to the number of days to process applications, authorizations or approvals for oil, gas, or coal projects; and

(3) an assessment of whether applicable Federal agencies treated wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission projects the same as oil, gas, or coal projects during the previous calendar year.

(d) ENSURING ENERGY SECURITY.—

(1) LIMITATION ON ISSUANCE OF CERTAIN APPROVALS.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act—

(A) the Secretary of the Interior may not approve a permit to extract coal or to drill on an onshore oil or gas lease on Federal land unless an approval for onshore wind or solar development has been issued during the 120-day period ending on the date of the issuance of the approval for oil or gas development; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior may not approve a permit to drill on an offshore oil or gas lease on the Outer Continental Shelf under section 2(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331(a)) unless an approval for offshore wind development on the Outer Continental Shelf of similar scope has been issued during the 120-day period ending on the date of the issuance of the approval for oil or gas development.

(2) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the Secretary to approve applications for a permit to drill for onshore or offshore oil or gas development or a permit to extract coal.

(e) TIMELY FEDERAL REVIEW.—

(1) DEADLINES TO COMPLETE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS UNDER NEPA.—With respect to any proposed wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission development on Federal land or waters, including the Outer Continental Shelf, requiring an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Secretary shall complete such environmental impact statement or environmental assessment within the deadlines established under section 107(g) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336a(g)).

(2) DEADLINE FOR DETERMINATION OF RIGHT-OF-WAY.—Not later than 180 days after completion of the environmental impact statement or environmental assessment, as applicable, for wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission development on Federal land or waters, including the Outer Continental Shelf, the Secretary shall issue a right-of-way, except in the event that a no action alternative is selected.

(f) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

(1) REVIEWABILITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If a Federal agency suspends construction or operations of a wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission project, or otherwise prevents a wind, solar, storage, or related electric transmission project from commencing and completing construction, operation, or related ancillary activities, including by revoking, rescinding, withdrawing, terminating, suspending, amending, altering, or otherwise rendering ineffective any authorization for a project or the final environmental document the authorization relies on, shall be considered final agency action subject to judicial review under chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code.

(B) VENUE.—A person seeking judicial review for an action described in subparagraph (A) shall obtain review of such action in the United States Court of Appeals for any circuit wherein the project is located.

(2) TIMING.—For any claim brought regarding an action in paragraph (A), the court of competent jurisdiction shall issue a decision for such challenge—

(A) as expeditiously as practicable; and

(B) not later than the date that is 30 days after the date on which the civil action is filed, unless the court determines that additional time is required in the interests of justice.

(3) APPLICABILITY.—This section shall apply to any actions in paragraph (1) that occurred after January 19, 2025.

(g) ENSURING FAIRNESS ON FEDERAL LANDS AND WATERS.—

(1) FLPMA AMENDMENTS.—The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 is amended—

(A) in section 103(c) (43 U.S.C. 1702(c)), by striking ''historical values;'' and inserting ''historical values, including the generation, transmission, and storage of renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, and geothermal energy;''; and

(B) in section 302 (43 U.S.C. 1732), by inserting at the end ''(e) The Secretary shall manage the public lands to facilitate the generation, transmission, and storage of renewable energy resources, consistent with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield under this Act. For the purposes of this Act, such activities are deemed to be consistent with multiple-use management.''.

(2) OCSLA AMENDMENTS.—Section 8(p) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1337(p)) is amended by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

''(4) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall ensure that any activity under this subsection is carried out in a manner that provides for a balance of—

''(A) safety;

''(B) the protection of the environment;

''(C) the prevention of waste;

''(D) the conservation of the natural resources of the outer Continental Shelf;

''(E) coordination with relevant Federal agencies and Tribal, State, and local governments;

''(F) the protection of the national security interests of the United States, including energy security;

''(G) the protection of correlative rights in the outer Continental Shelf, including the energy generation potential of other offshore renewable energy leases;

"(H) a fair return to the United States for any lease, easement, or right-of-way under this subsection;

"(I) prevention of unreasonable interference with other uses of the exclusive economic zone, the high seas, and the territorial seas, as determined by the Secretary;

"(J) consideration of—

"(i) the location of, and any schedule relating to, a lease, easement, or right-of-way for an area of the outer Continental Shelf; and

"(ii) any other use of the sea or seabed, including use for a fishery or fishery survey, a sealane, a regional coastal observing system or other scientific observation platform such as a buoy, a potential site of a deepwater port, or navigation;

"(K) public notice and comment on any proposal submitted for a lease, easement, or right-of-way under this subsection;

"(L) the oversight, inspection, research, monitoring, and enforcement relating to a lease, easement, or right-of-way under this subsection; and

"(M) the consideration of any applicable Federal, Tribal, and State renewable energy mandates, targets, and goals.".

SEC. 113. RATEPAYER PROTECTION AGAINST UNECONOMIC POWER GENERATION.

Section 202(c) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking "Commission" after "During the continuance of any war in which the United States is engaged, or whenever the" and inserting "Secretary of Energy (referred to in this subsection as the 'Secretary')";

(B) by striking "exists" after "determines that an emergency" and inserting "currently exists or will occur within 6 months";

(C) by striking "Commission" after "or other causes, the" and inserting "Secretary";

(D) by inserting "As part of the order, the Secretary shall explain why such order best meets the emergency and serves the public interest." after "serve the public interest."; and

(E) by striking "Commission" after "carrying out such order, the" and inserting "Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this subsection as the 'Commission')";

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking "Commission" after "law or regulation, the" and inserting "Secretary"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following: "The Secretary shall state in such orders—

"(A) that are in effect for 96 or fewer hours, the specific hours that are necessary to meet the emergency and serve the public interest; or

"(B) that are in effect for more than 96 hours, the specific methodology by which such hours that are necessary to meet the emergency and serve the public interest were determined.".

(3) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking "Commission" wherever it appears and inserting "Secretary";

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking "that may result in a conflict with a requirement of any Federal, State, or local environmental law or regulation";

(C) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by inserting ‘‘that may result in a conflict with a requirement of any Federal, State, or local environmental law or regulation’’ after ‘‘In renewing or reissuing an order under subparagraph (A)’’; and

(ii) by inserting ‘‘The Secretary shall make available to the public the primary Federal agency consulted.’’ after ‘‘practicable.’’; and

(D) by adding at the end—

‘‘(C) Before renewing or reissuing an order under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall undertake a robust study of available alternatives that would reduce the net costs as compared to renewing or reissuing the order.

‘‘(D) In the event the Secretary issues a renewed or reissued order under this paragraph, a petition for judicial review of such renewed or reissued order may be filed under section 313(b) without filing a request for rehearing or otherwise complying with any requirements of section 313(a).’’; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

"(6)(A) Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary issues an order under paragraph (1), the Commission shall publish—

"(i) estimates of the costs that are expected to be incurred by any electric utility and customers of such electric utility as a result of the order; and

"(ii) other expected impacts of the order.

"(B) Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary issues an order under paragraph (1), an electric utility that has been, or is expected to be, affected as a result of the order, including any electric utility described in subparagraph (A)(i), shall provide in writing to customers of the electric utility a description of the costs incurred due to the order, or costs expected to be incurred as a result of the order, including any information relevant to the electric utility and the customers of the electric utility published under subparagraph (A).".

TITLE II—CUTTING ENERGY BILLS FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES

SEC. 201. LOWERING HOUSEHOLD HEATING AND COOLING BILLS.

(a) FUNDING.—Section 2602 of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking ‘‘section 2607A)’’ and inserting ‘‘section 2604(e), 2605(u), 2607A, 2607B, or 2607C)’’; and

(B) by striking ‘‘$2,000,000,000’’ and all that follows and inserting ‘‘such sums as may be necessary, including such sums as may be necessary to enable the States to assist all households that meet the eligibility requirements established under this title and to enable States to implement home energy affordability measures described in section 2605(b)(3).’’;

(2) in subsection (e), in the first sentence—

(A) by striking ‘‘in each fiscal year’’;

(B) by striking ‘‘$600,000,000’’ and inserting ‘‘$2,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2026, and $2,000,000,000 plus such additional sums as may be necessary for each fiscal year thereafter,''; and

(C) by inserting '', or arising from a major disaster, as defined in section 2604(e)(1)'' before the period at the end; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(f) There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out section 2607C, including making grants under that section, $1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2026, and $1,000,000,000 plus such additional sums as may be necessary for each fiscal year thereafter.''.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2603 of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8622) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (6), (7) through (10), and (11), as paragraphs (6) through (8), (10) through (13), and (15), respectively;

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) The terms 'extreme heat' and 'extreme cold', used with respect to a period, means a period in which there is an increased risk of—

''(A) heat-related or cold-related, respectively, illness, hospitalization, or death; or

''(B) failures or energy shutoffs of home cooling or heating, respectively.

''(5) The term 'HEAP coordinator' means an employee—

''(A) who administers a program funded under section 2602(b); and

''(B) whose salary is paid, partly or wholly, with funds made available under that section.'';

(3) by inserting after paragraph (8), as so redesignated, the following:

''(9) The term 'local coordinating agency' means any local organization or local office that receives funds under section 2602(b) to perform customer intake, or approval of benefits, on behalf of the State agency.''; and

(4) by inserting after paragraph (13), as so redesignated, the following:

''(14) The term 'State agency' means any State agency that administers the program funded under section 2602(b).''.

(c) ASSISTANCE FOR EMERGENCIES AND MAJOR DISASTERS, INCLUDING EXTREME HEAT AND COLD.—Section 2604 of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8623) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)(B), by striking "section 2605(b)(9)(B)" and inserting "section 2605(b)(10)(B)"; and

(2) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking "(e)" and inserting the following:

"(e)(1) In this subsection:

"(A) The term 'covered household' means an eligible household in an area where the President, or the Secretary, as the case may be, has declared or determined the occurrence of a natural disaster, emergency, or major disaster.

"(B) The term 'major disaster' means—

"(i) a major disaster or emergency declared under section 401 or 501, respectively, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170, 5191);

"(ii) a public health emergency determined under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d); or

"(iii) a period of extreme heat or extreme cold, as determined by the Secretary.

"(2)";

(B) in paragraph (2), as so designated, by striking ''natural disaster or other emergency involved'' and inserting ''natural disaster, emergency, or major disaster involved''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) Upon a declaration or a determination of a natural disaster, emergency, or major disaster, for an area, the Secretary and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall, to the extent practicable, provide heating or cooling assistance through such an allotment to a State for covered households in that area.

''(4) To receive assistance under this subsection, the State that has jurisdiction over the covered households shall provide assurances to the Secretary that the State—

''(A) will not preclude a household that receives heating assistance or cooling assistance under this title during a calendar year, on the basis of obtaining that assistance, from receiving cooling assistance or heating assistance, respectively, under this title during that year;

''(B) will not require a household to indicate that a household member has a medical need for assistance under this title, to be eligible for that assistance; and

"(C) will allow use of such assistance for purposes for which heating or cooling assistance is available under the program funded under section 2602(b), including for providing energy-efficient air conditioners, and other equipment needed for home cooling, to eligible households.".

(d) ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS.—Section 2605 of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking "paragraph (5)" and inserting "paragraph (6)";

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ", subject to subsection (c)(1)(A)," after "only";

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking "(B)" and all that follows through clause (ii) and inserting the following:

"(B) households with incomes which do not exceed the greater of—

"(i) an amount equal to 250 percent of the poverty level; or

"(ii) an amount equal to 80 percent of the State median income,"; and

(iii) in the matter following subparagraph (B)—

(I) by striking "may give" and inserting "shall give"; and

(II) by inserting before the semicolon the following: ", and the State may not exclude a household from eligibility on the basis of citizenship of 1 or more of the household members";

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (16) as paragraphs (4) through (17), respectively;

(D) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

"(3) ENERGY BURDEN LIMITS.—To the extent practicable, the Secretary shall work with States using funding under section 2602(b) (supplemented by funding available through State-level energy programs, utility affordability initiatives, or other mechanisms as determined by the State in consultation with the Secretary) to implement home energy affordability measures—

"(A) to ensure that no household eligible under paragraph (2) experiences an energy burden for which the expenditures of the household for home energy exceed 3 percent of household income; and

"(B) to prioritize the further reduction of energy burdens for such eligible households with the lowest incomes."; and

(E) in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (10), as so redesignated, by striking "paragraph (16)" and inserting "paragraph (17)";

(2) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking "assistance to be provided under this title, including criteria" and inserting "assistance to be provided under this title, including—

"(i) certifying that the State and local coordinating agencies in the State—

"(I) shall, to the greatest extent possible, use data sharing agreements with Federal and State low-income assistance programs, including the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), the Medicaid program established under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.), and the supplemental security income program established under title XVI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.), to verify eligibility;

"(II) shall implement simplified re-enrollment procedures for households with fixed incomes or households already determined to be eligible under other Federal and State low-income assistance programs, to reduce administrative burdens on applicants and agencies;

"(III) shall not require applicants to submit proof of citizenship to establish status as an eligible household; and

"(IV) if neither the verification process described in subclause (I) nor the re-enrollment process described in subclause (II) apply to a household, shall allow applicants to self-attest that the applicants meet the criteria established under this title for an eligible household, to the extent necessary to facilitate access to assistance and prevent undue hardship for applicants; and

"(ii) describing criteria.";

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking "paragraph (5)" and inserting "paragraph (6)"; and

(C) in subparagraph (F), by striking "clauses (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (10), (12), (13), and (15) of subsection (b)" and inserting "paragraphs (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (11), (13), (14), and (16) of subsection (b)";

(3) in subsection (e), by striking "subsection (b)(10)" and inserting "subsection (b)(11)";

(4) in subsection (f), by adding at the end the following:

"(3) For purposes of section 401(c), and the remainder of title IV, of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1611(a), 1601 et seq.), assistance under this title shall not be considered to be a Federal public benefit.''; and

(5) in subsection (j), by striking ''the State may apply'' and inserting ''the State may, subject to subsection (c)(1)(A)(i), apply''.

(e) CONDITIONS FOR FUNDING.—Section 2605 of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(C), by inserting before the semicolon the following: '', using toxics-free materials that do not contain asthmagens or respiratory sensitizers, giving priority in the use of those funds under this subparagraph, to the greatest extent practicable, to supporting emergency home repairs that foster energy efficiency, decarbonization, and household resilience, including through beneficial electrification of heating and cooling'';

(B) in paragraph (8), as so redesignated—

(i) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''and'' at the end; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

''(E) ensure that—

"(i) the home energy supplier will not charge late fees for any payment, by a household receiving assistance through the program funded under section 2602(b), during the period beginning 6 months before and ending 6 months after a date on which the supplier receives funds through the program for the household; and

"(ii) if the supplier receives funds through the program for such a household and charged such late fees during that period, the supplier shall refund the fees to the household not later than 7 days after the date the supplier receives the funds;

"(F) ensure that the home energy supplier will not shut off home energy from a household that received assistance through the program funded under section 2602(b), within the 2-year period beginning on the date the household received the assistance;

"(G) ensure that the home energy supplier, in return for receiving funds through the program funded under section 2602(b)—

"(i) will provide to the State data on households that have not paid their home energy bills, to enable the State and the supplier to carry out coordinated outreach concerning assistance available through the program funded under section 2602(b); and

''(ii) will, when sending a notice of late payments to such households, include information on such assistance, on how to access such assistance through the program, and on eligibility criteria for the program; and

''(H) ensure that the home energy supplier will, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act, in return for receiving assistance under the program funded under section 2602(b) and through a partnership with the State, offer a low-income energy affordability payment program;''; and

(C) in paragraph (10), as so redesignated—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''10 percent'' and inserting ''15 percent''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' at the end; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

"(C) in planning and administering that program, the State shall use the portion of the amount described in subparagraph (A), that exceeds 10 percent of the funds described in subparagraph (A), to expand the State program funded under section 2602(b) so that the State operates the program on a year-round basis; and

"(D) in planning and administering that program, the State—

"(i) shall make technological changes to allow, not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act, for online submission of applications for assistance through that program; and

"(ii) shall, to the extent practicable—

"(I) conduct outreach activities, including activities to increase enrollment as described in subsection (p);

"(II) ensure that all HEAP coordinators in the State receive wages, for administration funded under section 2602(b), at not less than the greater of $15 per hour or the applicable Federal, State, or local minimum wage rate;

"(III) conduct training for HEAP coordinators, State agency staff, and community partners on best practices for outreach, application processing, and assisting eligible households;

"(IV) as needed, conduct outreach relating to the program funded under section 2602(b) to rural electric cooperatives, home energy suppliers owned by a political subdivision of a State, such as a municipally owned electric utility, and home energy suppliers owned by any agency, authority, corporation, or instrumentality of a political subdivision of a State; and

"(V) ensure autoenrollment of eligible households into the program funded under section 2602(b), and in the process document any potential barriers to autoenrollment that need to be clarified or otherwise addressed at the Federal level;'';

(2) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (G), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (H) as subparagraph (I); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (G) the following:

''(H) describes how the State will expand the State program funded under section 2602(b) so that the State operates the program on a year-round basis in accordance with subsection (b)(10)(C) and the measures the State has taken so far to carry out that expansion; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(m) The Secretary shall allow, to the greatest extent possible, eligible households to obtain assistance with minimal administrative burden, by carrying out subsection (c)(1)(A)(i).

''(n) The Secretary shall, by grant or contract, provide for a study that examines the rates of home energy shutoffs and assessments of late fees among eligible households, relative to those rates for households that are not eligible households, over a period of several years.

"(o) The Secretary shall provide technical assistance to States to support partnerships described in subsection (b)(8)(H).

"(p)(1) The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, shall issue guidance for use of funds for administrative activities described in subsection (b)(10) to increase, through partnerships with elementary schools, secondary schools, and local educational agencies, enrollment in the program funded under section 2602(b) among eligible households that include children and that have high energy burdens.

"(2) The Secretary shall issue guidance for use by States on outreach relating to assistance through the program funded under section 2602(b) to high-risk individuals, with relevant medical conditions, that benefit from the use of medical equipment that requires electricity, including a ventilator, an oxygen concentrator, or another medical device that requires electricity.

"(3) The Secretary shall issue guidance for use by States on how to ensure that eligible households are aware of additional grants, tax credits, and rebates, made available under Public Law 117–169, or an amendment made by such law.

"(q) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act, the Secretary shall require each State receiving funds under this title, including allotments under subsection (a) or (e) of section 2604, to develop and update as necessary, an action plan for a period of extreme heat, which shall describe how the State will use its allotments under this title to assist eligible households in covering cooling costs and mitigating heat-related health risks.

"(r) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act, the Secretary shall conduct a review of eligibility criteria for assistance under this title and identify additional vulnerable populations to include under such criteria, such as pregnant women, children, and individuals with medical conditions exacerbated by a period of extreme heat.

"(s) The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall require State energy offices receiving Federal funds under this title to develop plans—

"(1) to retrofit low-income housing stock to adapt to rising temperatures and address environmental hazards, including—

"(A) deploying highly efficient cooling systems, including heat pumps;

"(B) expanding weatherization and passive cooling strategies;

''(C) addressing structural and health hazards, including mold, lead, asbestos, and pest infections; and

''(D) ensuring that necessary electrical panel and wiring upgrades are completed to support the installation of cooling systems and energy efficiency improvements; and

''(2) to assess and adapt existing (as of the date of development of the plan) shutoff policies to protect all households while considering the impact on energy affordability and energy grid reliability.

''(t)(1) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, shall submit a report to Congress that—

''(A) identifies safe residential temperature standards for federally assisted dwelling units, considering risks of periods of extreme heat and extreme cold and regional climate variations; and

''(B) proposes strategies to ensure compliance with the standards, including permitting covered utility allowances to be used for cooling assistance where feasible, taking into account regional climate variations and housing stock differences.

''(2) In this subsection, the term 'covered utility allowance' means a utility allowance—

''(A) applicable to public housing dwelling units under section 3 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a); or

''(B) under the housing choice voucher program under section 8(o)(2)(D) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(2)(D)).''.

(f) WEATHERIZATION.—Section 2605(k) of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624(k)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''15 percent'' and inserting ''25 percent''; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(i) by striking ''subparagraph (B)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (C)''; and

(ii) by striking ''the greater of 25 percent'' and inserting ''a portion equal to the greater of 35 percent'';

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) The State—

''(i) shall, to the extent practicable—

''(I) use the portion described in subparagraph (A) for energy-related home repair that reduces dependence on fossil fuel energy sources; and

''(II) use the portion to facilitate the use of funds made available under section 2602(b) to increase the participation of eligible households in community solar programs, or to otherwise increase access to and ownership of distributed renewable energy infrastructure among eligible households; and

''(ii) shall if possible give the highest priority to using the portion for home repair that replaces appliances that rely on fossil fuels with appliances that use electric heating or cooling technology, powered by renewable energy.''.

(g) HOME ENERGY PAYMENT ARREARS DATA COLLECTION.—Section 2605 of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624), as amended by subsection (e), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(u)(1)(A) The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall develop a standardized template for States and home energy suppliers to use to track and report data on eligible households in arrears in home energy payments, including data on the related fees and disconnections for such households.

"(B) The template developed under subparagraph (A) shall—

"(i) include a definition of an eligible household in arrears, with respect to home energy payments, as an eligible household that has not made payment on a home energy bill for more than 60 to 90 days, as determined by the State agency or local coordinating agency, unless otherwise specified by State law;

"(ii) include metrics on related disconnections, late fees, reconnections, and arrearage balances for eligible households; and

"(iii) align with existing (as of the date of the development) Federal and State reporting mechanisms where applicable.

"(2) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act, the Secretary shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, issue guidance on best practices for States (including through partnerships with home energy suppliers) to pay for home energy payment arrearages with assistance provided through the program funded under section 2602(b), including by paying for such arrearages at the time of dissemination of assistance through that program. Such guidance shall prohibit any home energy supplier receiving funds through the program from recovering arrearage assistance costs through rate increases or other charges to customers, including cost recovery mechanisms that disproportionately impact low-income households.

"(3) To the extent practicable, the Secretary and the Secretary of Energy shall jointly—

"(A) implement a data tracking system, aligned with the standardized reporting template developed under paragraph (1), to collect aggregate data regarding the number of eligible households in arrears and their respective energy burdens and develop recommendations to HEAP coordinators on how to minimize energy burdens for the households; and

"(B) issue guidance to home energy suppliers with recommendations for working with State agencies to address home energy payment arrearages of eligible households.

"(4) The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, may make grants to States to assist the States in implementing data tracking and reporting requirements under this subsection.

"(5) There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection such sums as may be necessary.".

(h) PROGRAM NAME CHANGE.—

(1) LIHEAP.—The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 is amended—

(A) in section 2607A(b) (42 U.S.C. 8626a(b)), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "low-income" the first place it appears; and

(B) in section 2607B(e)(2)(B)(ii) (42 U.S.C. 8626b(e)(2)(B)(ii)), by striking "Low-Income".

(2) OTHER LAW.—A reference in any other Federal law (other than that Act), Executive order, rule, regulation, or delegation of authority, or any document, of or relating to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, shall be deemed to refer to the Home Energy Assistance Program.

(i) JUST TRANSITION GRANTS.—The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 is amended by inserting after section 2607B (42 U.S.C. 8626b) the following:

"SEC. 2607C. HEAP ENERGY AFFORDABILITY AND RESILIENCE GRANTS.

"(a) GRANT PROGRAM.—The Secretary and the Secretary of Energy shall jointly carry out a grant program under this section. In carrying out the program, the Secretaries shall make grants for a period of 3 years to States, Tribes, and local governments to support the development and implementation of interagency plans to reduce energy burdens for eligible households with high home energy use. The plans shall promote the reduction of those burdens in a manner that supports sustained reductions in household energy costs through improved energy efficiency, reliability, and access to cost-saving technologies. The Secretaries shall make the grants for a period of 3 years.

"(b) PREFERENCES.—In making the grants, the Secretary shall give a preference to States, Tribes, and local governments, who set up coordination systems—

"(1) to identify eligible households, that are recipients of assistance through the program funded under section 2602(b), with high home energy use;

"(2) to prioritize eligible households with the highest energy burdens and lowest incomes, in alignment with the priority provisions in paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 2605(b), to receive emergency repair, weatherization, and retrofit assistance that results in decarbonization and reductions in energy use; and

"(3) to partner with entities carrying out workforce development initiatives, unions, or business enterprises owned by individuals that are socially disadvantaged to provide emergency repairs, weatherization, and retrofit assistance.

"(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—At the conclusion of the 3-year grant period, the Secretaries shall—

"(1) conduct an evaluation of the program's outcomes; and

"(2) prepare and submit to Congress a report containing the results of the evaluation and policy recommendations.".

(j) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 2607B(e)(2)(K) (42 U.S.C. 8626b(e)(2)(K)) by striking "paragraphs (2), (3), (4), (5), (7), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), and (14) of section 2605(b)" and inserting "paragraphs (2), (4), (5), (6), (8), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), and (15) of section 2605(b)"; and

(2) in section 2610(b)(1) (42 U.S.C. 8629) by striking "clauses (2), (5), (8), and (15) of section

2605(b)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (2), (6), (9), and (16) of section 2605(b)''.

SEC. 202. HOME WEATHERIZATION.

(a) ENHANCEMENT AND INNOVATION.—Section 414D of the Energy Conservation and Production Act (42 U.S.C. 6864d) is amended by striking subsection (k).

(b) AVERAGE COST PER DWELLING UNIT.—Section 415(c)(1) of the Energy Conservation and Production Act (42 U.S.C. 6865(c)(1)) is amended by striking ''$6,500'' and inserting ''$12,000''.

(c) CLARIFICATION OF REWEATHERIZATION LIMITATION.—Section 415(c)(2) of the Energy Conservation and Production Act (42 U.S.C. 6865(c)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking '', or under other Federal programs'';

(2) by striking '', may'' and inserting ''may''; and

(3) by striking ''or under other Federal programs, or from receiving non-Federal assistance for weatherization''.

(d) RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS.—Section 415(c) of the Energy Conservation and Production Act (42 U.S.C. 6865(c)) is amended by striking paragraph (4).

(e) WEATHERIZATION READINESS PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Energy Conservation and Production Act is amended by adding after section 414E (42 U.S.C. 6864e) the following section:

"SEC. 414F. WEATHERIZATION READINESS PROGRAM.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall establish a weatherization readiness program to provide grants to States, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations to implement measures to make dwelling units occupied by low-income persons ready to receive weatherization measures pursuant to the weatherization program conducted under this part by addressing structural, plumbing, roofing, and electrical issues and environmental hazards, and implementing other measures that the Secretary determines to be appropriate, to reduce the frequency of deferrals of such weatherization measures when the condition of a dwelling unit renders delivery of weatherization measures unsafe or ineffective.

"(b) ALIGNMENT OF REQUIREMENTS.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, to the extent possible, the Secretary shall, in establishing the weatherization readiness program under this section—

"(1) align the requirements of such weatherization readiness program with the requirements of the weatherization program conducted under this part; and

“(2) seek to reduce barriers to leveraging other sources of funding for weatherization readiness measures.

“(c) SAVINGS-TO-INVESTMENT RATIO.—The weatherization readiness program established under this section shall not include a savings-to-investment ratio requirement.

“(d) PREVIOUS WEATHERIZATION.—Weatherization readiness measures implemented pursuant to the weatherization readiness program established under this section shall not be considered previous weatherization for purposes of section 415(c)(2).

“(e) AVERAGE COST pER DWELLING UNIT.—The Secretary shall establish, or require a State grantee to establish, a limit for expenditures for weatherization readiness measures, including labor, materials, and related matters, to be implemented with respect to a dwelling unit, on an average cost per unit basis, pursuant to the weatherization readiness program established under this section.

“(f) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall allocate funding made available under this section to States and tribal organizations in a manner consistent with the allocation of financial assistance for weatherization assistance under the weatherization program conducted under this part.

"(2) UPDATED ALLOCATION.—Not sooner than October 1, 2029, the Secretary, in consultation with States and tribal organizations, may, by rule, update the method to allocate funding to States and tribal organizations under this section to more accurately reflect the relative need for funding for weatherization readiness measures among low-income persons throughout the States and Indian tribes.

"(g) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than an amount equal to 15 percent of any grant made by the Secretary under this section may be used for administrative purposes, except that not more than one-half of such amount may be used by any State for such purposes.

"(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030 to carry out this section.".

(2) TABLE OF CONTENTS AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Conservation and Production Act is amended by adding after the item relating to section 414E the following:

"Sec. 414F. Weatherization readiness program.".

(f) REAUTHORIZATION OF WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—Paragraph (2) of section 422 of the

Energy Conservation and Production Act (42 U.S.C. 6872) is amended by striking "2025" and inserting "2030".

SEC. 203. REFLECTIVE ROOFING.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish and carry out a program to provide rebates to eligible households for the purchase and installation of eligible cool roof products.

(b) REBATE AMOUNT.—The amount of a rebate provided under the program established under subsection (a) shall be—

(1) with respect to an eligible cool roof product installed on a low-sloped roof—

(A) $0.25 per square foot if such eligible cool roof product has—

(i) a minimum 3-year aged solar reflectance of 0.65 and a minimum 3-year-aged thermal emittance of 0.75; or

(ii) a minimum 3-year aged Solar Reflectance Index of 78; and

(B) $0.75 per square foot if such eligible cool roof product has—

(i) a minimum 3-year aged solar reflectance of 0.75 and a minimum 3-year-aged thermal emittance of 0.75; or

(ii) a minimum 3-year aged Solar Reflectance Index of 92; and

(2) with respect to an eligible cool roof product installed on a steep-sloped roof—

(A) $0.25 per square foot if such eligible cool roof product has—

(i) a minimum 3-year aged solar reflectance of 0.25 and a minimum 3-year-aged thermal emittance of 0.75; or

(ii) a minimum 3-year aged Solar Reflectance Index of 23; and

(B) $0.75 per square foot if such eligible cool roof product has—

(i) a minimum 3-year aged solar reflectance of 0.40 and a minimum 3-year-aged thermal emittance of 0.75; or

(ii) a minimum 3-year aged Solar Reflectance Index of 43.

(c) COMBINING REBATES.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an eligible household from receiving any other grant, rebate, or other financial assistance with respect to the same eligible cool roof product for which a rebate is provided under the program established under subsection (a).

(d) LOW-INCOME AND HIGH ENERGY BURDEN HOUSEHOLDS.—In implementing this section, the Secretary shall ensure that not less that 40 percent of total incremental energy savings achieved under this program in a given year shall accrue to households that in the determination of the Secretary are low-income or experience a disproportionately high energy burden.

(e) PARTICIPATION STATEMENTS.—Each State and each retail electricity supplier shall publish on an annual basis an impact statement that disaggregates participation under this section by income and demographic characteristics, savings, and health outcomes.

(f) TERMINATION DATE.—The program established under subsection (a) shall terminate on September 30, 2030.

(g) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 6 months after the program established under subsection (a) terminates, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing, for each program participant—

(1) whether the participant used the rebate to help retrofit an old roof or install a new roof;

(2) if the participant retrofitted an old roof, which older roof product the new eligible cool roof product replaced or covered; and

(3) what eligible cool roof product the participant purchased using the rebate.

(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) 3-YEAR AGED.—The term ‘‘3-year aged’’ means, with respect to solar reflectance or thermal emittance of an eligible cool roof product, the solar reflectance or thermal emittance is tested after completing 3 years of field exposure, or tested after laboratory exposure that has replicated the effects of 3 years of natural exposure if the eligible cool roof product has begun but not yet completed field exposure, in accordance with the most recent standard issued by the American National Standard Institute and Cool Roof Rating Council, S100–2021.

(2) ELIGIBLE COOL ROOF PRODUCT.—The term ‘‘eligible cool roof product’’ means a product that has a rating from the Cool Roof Rating Council.

(3) ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term ‘‘eligible household’’ means an individual or family—

(i) residing in a single-family or multifamily building;

(ii) the total annual income of which is less than 200 percent of the median income of the ZIP Code in which the individual or family resides (as reported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development); and

(iii) residing in a ZIP Code Tabulation Area that is in the 75th percentile or higher of the Heat and Health Index of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

(B) ALASKA, HAWAII, AND TERRITORIES.—With respect to an individual or family residing in Alaska, Hawaii, or a territory of the United States, until the date that their respective State or territory is added to the Heat and Health Index of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the term ‘‘eligible household’’ means that such individual or family—

(i) resides in a single-family or multifamily building; and

(ii) has a total annual income that is less than 200 percent of the median income of the ZIP Code in which the individual or family resides (as reported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development).

(4) INCIDENT SOLAR FLUX.—The term ''incident solar flux'' means the solar power per unit area that strikes a surface.

(5) LOW-SLOPED ROOF.—The term ''low-sloped roof'' means a roof with a slope (ratio of rise to run) of 2:12 or less.

(6) RADIANT HEAT FLUX.—The term ''radiant heat flux'' means the radiant power per unit area.

(7) REFLECTED SOLAR FLUX.—The term ''reflected solar flux'' means the solar power per unit area reflected from a surface.

(8) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

(9) SOLAR REFLECTANCE.—The term ''solar reflectance'' means the ratio of reflected solar flux to the incident solar flux.

(10) SOLAR REFLECTANCE INDEX.—The term ''Solar Reflectance Index'' means a calculated value that combines solar reflectance with thermal emittance into a single metric, in accordance with

section 2.2.9. of the Cool Roof Rating Council's Roof Product Rating Program Manual.

(11) STEEP-SLOPED ROOF.—The term ''steep-sloped roof'' means a roof with a slope (ratio of rise to run) greater than 2:12.

(12) THERMAL EMITTANCE.—The term ''thermal emittance'' means the ratio of the radiant heat flux emitted by a material tested at a temperature near 300 kelvin.

SEC. 204. DOMESTIC NATURAL GAS PRICE PROTECTION.

(a) EXPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS.—

(1) EXPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS.—Section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) EXPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS.—

''(1) ORDER REQUIRED.—No person shall export any natural gas from the United States to a foreign country without first having secured an order of the Secretary of Energy authorizing it to do so. The Secretary of Energy may issue such order upon application only if, after opportunity for hearing, the Secretary of Energy finds that the proposed exportation will be consistent with the public interest. The Secretary of Energy may by its order grant such application, in whole or in part, with such modification and upon such terms and conditions as the Secretary of Energy may find necessary or appropriate, and may from time to time, after opportunity for hearing, and for good cause shown, issue such supplemental order for such exportation as it may find necessary or appropriate.

"(2) DEADLINE.—The Secretary of Energy shall find whether proposed exportation of natural gas will be consistent with the public interest under paragraph (1) by not later than the date that is 1 year after the later of—

"(A) the date on which the Secretary of Energy receives the final environmental impact statement for such proposed exportation from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; and

"(B) the date on which the Secretary completes each assessment required by paragraph (4).

"(3) PUBLIC INTEREST FINDING.—The Secretary of Energy may find that proposed exportation of natural gas for which an application is submitted under paragraph (1) will be consistent with the public interest under such paragraph only if the Secretary of Energy determines, based on the applicable assessment under paragraph (4), that the proposed exportation of natural gas will not be likely to—

"(A) significantly contribute to climate change, including by slowing the global energy transition needed to achieve deep reductions of global greenhouse gas emissions within the next decade and net-zero global greenhouse gas emissions not later than 2050;

"(B) materially increase energy prices or energy price volatility for any segment of United States consumers; or

"(C) create a disproportionate cumulative burden of adverse human or environmental impacts on Tribes and communities with environmental justice concerns, including in rural and urban low-income areas.

"(4) ASSESSMENTS.—

"(A) CLIMATE CHANGE ASSESSMENT.—A determination under paragraph (3)(A) shall be based on an assessment of the expected impact of the proposed exportation of natural gas on climate change. Such assessment shall be based on the latest scientific information and use the 20-year global warming potential of methane, and shall include—

"(i) quantified estimates of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the full lifecycle of the natural gas proposed for exportation, including emissions associated with the extraction, transportation, liquefaction, storage, regasification, and consumption of such natural gas;

"(ii) a comparison of the estimated greenhouse gas emissions in clause (i) to a baseline that is consistent with the need to achieve deep reductions of global greenhouse gas emissions within the next decade and deep decarbonization pathways toward net-zero global greenhouse gas emissions not later than 2050;

"(iii) an assessment of the potential effects of the proposed exportation of natural gas on clean energy alternatives, including—

"(I) any decrease in global investment in and deployment of renewable energy, electrification, and energy efficiency and conservation technologies; and

"(II) any decrease in United States exports of clean energy technologies;

"(iv) quantified estimates of the social cost of the estimated greenhouse gas emissions in clause (i); and

"(v) an identification of the extent to which climate change is accelerating the loss of economic value in the United States and, separately, in other countries, due to rising sea levels, more intense storms, eroding coasts, increased risk and severity of wildfires, and other impacts associated with climate change.

"(B) ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT.—A determination under paragraph (3)(B) shall be based on an assessment of the expected economic impact of the proposed exportation of natural gas, including an assessment of the impact of the proposed exportation on all United States consumers, with specific estimates regarding each of the following consumer subgroups:

"(i) Low-income consumers.

"(ii) Working families.

"(iii) Small businesses.

"(iv) Manufacturers.

"(v) State, Tribal, and local governments.

"(vi) Producers and users of fertilizer.

"(vii) Facilities with high electricity demand, including data centers.

"(C) ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENT.—A determination under paragraph (3)(C) shall be based on an assessment of the expected impact of the proposed exportation of natural gas on environmental justice (which shall be consistent with Executive Order 14096 (42 U.S.C. 4321 note; relating to revitalizing our Nation's commitment to environmental justice for all), as published April 21, 2023), including assessments of impacts on—

"(i) the preexisting cumulative environmental burdens and social and health risks posed to Tribes and communities with environmental justice concerns, including in rural and urban low-income areas;

"(ii) local fisheries and the economic livelihood of the people employed by local fisheries;

"(iii) racial and socioeconomic disparities in impacted communities; and

"(iv) compliance with civil rights laws.

"(5) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—The Secretary of Energy shall—

"(A) provide to the public an opportunity to meaningfully participate, including by providing comments, in—

"(i) the finding of the Secretary of Energy on whether proposed exportation will be consistent with the public interest under paragraph (1); and

"(ii) any study by the Department of Energy intended to inform such finding; and

"(B) ensure that opportunities to meaningfully participate under subparagraph (A) address barriers that affect members of communities with environmental justice concerns, including those related to disability, language access, and lack of resources.

"(6) MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION.—Issuing an order authorizing the exportation of natural gas under this subsection shall be considered a major Federal action under section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by striking ''export any natural gas from the United States to a foreign country or'';

(ii) by inserting ''to the United States'' after ''from a foreign country''; and

(iii) by striking ''exportation or''; and

(B) in subsection (c)—

(i) by striking '', or the exportation of natural gas to a nation with which there is in effect a free trade agreement requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas,''; and

(ii) by striking ''or exportation''.

(b) PROCESS COORDINATION; HEARINGS; RULES OF PROCEDURE.—Section 15(b)(1) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717n(b)(1)) is amended by striking ''Commission'' and inserting ''Federal Energy Regulatory Commission''.

(c) TERMINATION OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION FOR APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL OF THE EXPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS.—The categorical exclusion under B5.7 of appendix B to subpart D of part 1021 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to export of natural gas and associated transportation by marine vessel), shall have no force or effect.

(d) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall, after public notice and comment, issue a rule to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 205. RURAL ENERGY SAVINGS.

Section 6407 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8107a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by striking "or" at the end;

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D); and

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

"(C) any Indian Tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304));";

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting "AND GRANTS" after "LOANS";

(B) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the requirements of this subsection, the Secretary shall provide—

"(A) loans to eligible entities that agree to use the loan funds to make loans under subsection (d) to qualified consumers for the purpose of implementing energy efficiency measures; and

"(B) at the election of any eligible entity that receives a loan under subparagraph (A), a grant in accordance with paragraph (10).";

(C) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the paragraph heading, by inserting "FOR LOANS" after "REQUIREMENTS"; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A)(i), by striking "that is";

(D) in paragraph (5)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting the clauses appropriately;

(ii) in the matter preceding clause (i) (as so redesignated), by striking ''With respect to a loan under paragraph (1)'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), with respect to a loan under paragraph (1)(A)''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) EXTENSIONS.—The Secretary may extend the term of a loan under subparagraph (A)(i), or the deadline for the repayment of an advance under subparagraph (A)(ii), as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.'';

(E) in paragraph (7)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1)(A)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (C), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''Repayment of the special advance'' and inserting ''Subject to an applicable extension under paragraph (5)(B), repayment of a special advance under this paragraph'';

(F) in paragraph (8), by striking ''paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1)(A)''; and

(G) by adding at the end the following:

''(10) GRANTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—At the election of an eligible entity that receives a loan under this subsection, the Secretary shall provide to the eligible entity a grant to pay for a portion of the costs incurred in—

''(i) applying for the loan;

''(ii) making a loan to a qualified consumer under subsection (d);

''(iii) making repairs to the property of a qualified consumer that facilitate the energy efficiency measures for the property financed through a loan provided to the qualified consumer under subsection (d);

''(iv) entering into a contract under subsection (e); or

''(v) carrying out any other duties of the eligible entity under this section.

''(B) AMOUNT.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the amount of a grant provided to an eligible entity under this paragraph shall be equal to not more than 5 percent of the amount of the loan provided to the eligible entity under this subsection.

"(ii) PERSISTENT POVERTY COUNTIES.—The amount of a grant provided under this paragraph to an eligible entity that will use the grant to make loans under subsection (d) to qualified consumers located in a persistent poverty county (as determined by the Secretary) shall be equal to 10 percent of the amount of the loan provided to the eligible entity under this subsection.";

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting "or grant" before "funds"; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) by striking "(B) shall finance" and inserting the following:

"(B)(i) may have a term and amortization schedule the length of which is the useful life of the energy efficiency measures implemented using the loan, provided that the loan to the qualified consumer does not exceed 20 years; and

"(ii) shall finance"; and

(II) in clause (ii) (as so designated), by striking "a loan term of not more than 10 years" and inserting "the applicable loan term described in clause (i)";

(4) in subsection (e)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting "OUTREACH," after "TRAINING,";

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking "and technical assistance of the program" and inserting "outreach, and technical assistance relating to the program under this section"; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by inserting ", outreach," after "technical assistance"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) FUNDING.—Of the amounts made available under subsection (i), the Secretary may use such sums as are necessary to provide outreach, training, and technical assistance under this subsection."; and

(5) in subsection (i), by striking "2023" and inserting "2030".

TITLE III—UNCLOGGING THE LOW-COST, CLEAN ENERGY BOTTLENECK

SEC. 301. EXPEDITED GENERATOR INTERCONNECTION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGY.—The term "advanced transmission technology" means any hardware or software that—

(A) increases the capacity, efficiency, reliability, resilience, or safety of transmission facilities and transmission technologies;

(B) is installed in addition to new or existing transmission facilities and transmission technologies—

(i) to give operators of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more situational awareness and control over the electric grid;

(ii) to make the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more efficient; or

(iii) to increase the transfer capacity of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies; and

(C) includes, but is not limited to, dynamic line ratings, advanced conductors, topology optimization, advanced power-flow controls, and other digital or physical systems that increase the usable transfer capability of the grid.

(2) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(3) ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT.—The term ''energy storage project'' means—

(A) any equipment that receives, stores, and delivers energy-using batteries, compressed air, pumped hydropower, hydrogen storage (including hydrolysis), thermal energy storage, regenerative fuel cells, flywheels, capacitors, superconducting magnets, or other technologies identified by the Commission; and

(B) any project for the construction or modification of equipment described in subparagraph (A) as part of an effort to build-out transmission interconnection opportunities.

(4) GENERATION PROJECT.—The term ''generation project'' means—

(A) any facility—

(i) that generates or injects electricity; and

(ii) for which an interconnection request is subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission; and

(B) any project for the construction or modification of a facility described in subparagraph (A).

(5) INTERCONNECTION CUSTOMER.—The term ''interconnection customer'' means a person or entity that has submitted an interconnection request.

(6) INTERCONNECTION REQUEST.—The term ''interconnection request'' means a request submitted to a public utility to interconnect a new generation project or energy storage project to the electric system of a public utility for the purposes of transmission of electric energy in interstate commerce or the sale of electric energy at wholesale.

(7) PUBLIC UTILITY.—The term ''public utility'' has the meaning given the term in section 201(e) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824(e)).

(8) TRANSMISSION FACILITY.—The term ''transmission facility'' means a facility that is used for the transmission of electric energy in interstate commerce.

(9) TRANSMISSION PROVIDER.—The term ''transmission provider'' means a public utility that owns, operates, or controls 1 or more transmission facilities.

(10) TRANSMISSION SYSTEM.—The term ''transmission system'' means a network of transmission facilities used for the transmission of electric energy in interstate commerce.

(b) RULEMAKING TO EXPEDITE GENERATOR INTERCONNECTION PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall initiate a rulemaking—

(A) to address the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of existing procedures for processing interconnection requests to ensure that new generation projects and energy storage projects can interconnect quickly, cost-effectively, and reliably;

(B) to invalidate expedited interconnection processes, using its section 206 authority, that have been adopted in 2025 or 2026 and which are not in the pro forma interconnection agreement and which use eligibility criteria that have disproportionately selected natural gas and coal projects in comparison to other projects such as, wind, solar and electric battery storage projects; and

(C) to revise the pro forma Large Generator Interconnection Procedures and, as appropriate, the pro forma Large Generator Interconnection Agreement, promulgated pursuant to section 35.28(f) of title 18, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), to require transmission providers—

(i) to develop and employ modeling assumptions for each resource type based on actual operating abilities and practices, for the purposes of studying an interconnection request, provided that the Commission shall not rely on such modeling assumptions to study projects out of queue priority;

(ii) to study interconnection requests in a manner consistent with the risk tolerance of the interconnection customer;

(iii) to establish simplified and standardized study pathways for small-scale or community-based generation projects, including distributed energy resources and projects serving low-income communities;

(iv) to select, as appropriate, 1 or more cost-effective solutions to address network reliability needs that may be identified while studying an interconnection request;

(v) to provide sufficient information to interconnection customers for the interconnection customers to understand how a transmission provider has implemented the assumptions and solutions described in clauses (i) and (iv);

(vi) to share and employ, as appropriate, queue management best practices, including with respect to the use of computing technologies, such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and automation, as well as standardized study criteria, in evaluating and processing interconnection requests, in order to expedite study results with respect to those requests; and

(vii) to implement transparency and performance-enhancing measures and requirements that transmission providers consider advanced transmission technologies to ensure timely and cost-conscious construction of necessary network upgrades once an interconnection agreement has been executed.

(2) DEADLINE FOR FINAL RULE.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall promulgate a final rule to complete the rulemaking initiated under paragraph (1).

(3) DEADLINE FOR COMPLIANCE FILINGS.—The Commission shall require each applicable Transmission Provider subject to the final rule issued pursuant to this rulemaking to submit their compliance filings within 60 days of the issuance of the final order, and the Commission shall have 60 days thereafter to approve or reject the compliance filing. Any

subsequent compliance filing thereafter shall be subject to these same timing requirements.

(4) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section alters, or may be construed to alter, the allocation of costs of the transmission system pursuant to the ratemaking authority of the Commission under section 205 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824d).

SEC. 302. ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(2) ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGY.—The term ''advanced transmission technology'' means any hardware or software that—

(A) increases the capacity, efficiency, reliability, resilience, or safety of transmission facilities and transmission technologies;

(B) is installed in addition to new or existing transmission facilities and transmission technologies—

(i) to give operators of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more situational awareness and control over the electric grid;

(ii) to make the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more efficient; or

(iii) to increase the transfer capacity of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies; and

(C) includes, but is not limited to, dynamic line ratings, advanced conductors, topology optimization, advanced power-flow controls, and other digital or physical systems that increase the usable transfer capability of the grid.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

(b) SHARED SAVINGS INCENTIVE FOR ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGIES.—

(1) DEFINITION OF DEVELOPER.—In this subsection, the term ''developer'', with respect to advanced transmission technology, means the entity that pays to install the advanced transmission technology.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF SHARED SAVINGS INCENTIVE.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall promulgate a final rule to implement section 219(b)(3) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824s(b)(3)) by

providing a shared savings incentive that returns a portion of the savings attributable to an investment in advanced transmission technology to the developer of that advanced transmission technology, in accordance with this subsection. The Commission may also establish alternative incentive mechanisms, including performance-based rate adjustments, accelerated depreciation, or return-on-equity adders, for utilities or transmission owners for which a shared-savings approach is impracticable.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall determine the percentage of savings attributable to an investment in advanced transmission technology that can be returned to the developer of that advanced transmission technology pursuant to the shared savings incentive established under paragraph (2), subject to the conditions that the percentage—

(i) is not less than 10 percent and not more than 25 percent;

(ii) is not determined on a per-project, per-investment, or case-by-case basis; and

(iii) is applied consistently to all investments in advanced transmission technology eligible for the shared savings incentive, regardless of the type of advanced transmission technology installed.

(B) TIME PERIOD FOR RECOVERY.—The shared savings incentive established under paragraph (2) shall return a percentage, determined in accordance with subparagraph (A), of the applicable savings to the developer of the applicable advanced transmission technology over a period of 10 years.

(4) ELIGIBILITY.—Subject to paragraph (5), the shared savings incentive established under paragraph (2) shall apply with respect to—

(A) any developer, with respect to the investment of that developer in advanced transmission technology that is installed as described in subsection (a)(2)(B); and

(B) any advanced transmission technology, including—

(i) advanced transmission technology that relates to new transmission facilities or transmission technologies; and

(ii) advanced transmission technology that relates to existing transmission facilities or transmission technologies.

(5) LIMITATIONS.—

(A) MINIMUM SAVINGS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The shared savings incentive established under paragraph (2) shall apply with respect to an investment in advanced transmission technology only if the expected savings attributable to the investment over the 3-year period described in paragraph (3)(B), as determined by the Commission and appropriately adjusted to reflect net present value of the expected savings, are at least 2 times the cost of the investment.

(ii) DETERMINATION.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall determine how to quantify the cost of an investment and the expected savings attributable to an investment for purposes of clause (i).

(II) COSTS.—For purposes of clause (i), the cost of an investment may include any costs associated with the permitting, installation, or purchase of the applicable advanced transmission technology.

(B) ALREADY INSTALLED ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGIES.—The shared savings incentive established under paragraph (2) may not be applied with respect to advanced transmission technology that is already installed as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(C) CONSUMER PROTECTION.—The Commission shall determine appropriate consumer protections for the shared savings incentive established under paragraph (2).

(6) EVALUATION AND SUNSET OF SHARED SAVINGS INCENTIVE.—

(A) EVALUATION.—Not earlier than 7 years, and not later than 10 years, after the shared savings incentive is established under paragraph (2), the Commission shall—

(i) evaluate the necessity and efficacy of the shared savings incentive; and

(ii) determine whether to maintain, revise, or suspend the shared savings incentive.

(B) CONSIDERATION OF ORDER NO. 1920.—In conducting the evaluation under subparagraph (A)(i), the Commission shall consider—

(i) how the shared savings incentive aligns with the requirement that advanced transmission technologies be considered in long-term regional transmission planning under Order No. 1920 of the Commission, entitled ''Building for the Future Through Electric Regional Transmission Planning and Cost Allocation'' (89 Fed. Reg. 49280 (June 11, 2024)) (or a successor order);

(ii) whether and how the shared savings incentive should be revised to further align with that requirement; and

(iii) whether, in light of that requirement, the shared savings incentive should be maintained or suspended.

(C) PUBLIC COMMENT.—In conducting the evaluation under subparagraph (A)(i), the Commission shall provide an opportunity for public comment, including by stakeholders.

(c) CONGESTION REPORTING.—

(1) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date that is 1 year after the effective date of the rule promulgated under paragraph (2), all operators of transmission facilities or transmission technologies shall submit to the Commission annual reports containing data on the costs associated with congestion management with respect to the transmission facilities or transmission technologies, including all relevant constraints.

(B) REQUIREMENT.—Each annual report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall identify—

(i) with respect to each reported constraint that caused more than $500,000 in associated costs—

(I) the cause of the constraint, including physical infrastructure and transient disruptions; and

(II) the next limiting element type and its identified rating limit; and

(ii) each constraint that will be addressed by planned future upgrades to infrastructure and facilities.

(2) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall promulgate a final rule establishing a universal metric and protocol for the measuring and reporting of data under paragraph (1).

(3) USES OF DATA.—

(A) ANALYSES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Commission and the Secretary shall each use the data submitted under paragraph (1) to conduct analyses, as the Commission or the Secretary, as applicable, determines to be appropriate.

(ii) COORDINATION.—The Commission and the Secretary may coordinate with respect to any analyses conducted using the data submitted under paragraph (1).

(B) MAP.—The Commission and the Secretary, acting jointly, shall—

(i) use the data submitted under paragraph (1) to create a map of costs associated with congestion management in the transmission system; and

(ii) update that map not less frequently than once each year.

(4) PUBLICATION OF DATA AND MAP.—The Commission and the Secretary shall make the data submitted under paragraph (1) and the map de-

scribed in paragraph (3)(B) publicly available on the websites of—

(A) the Commission; and

(B) the Department of Energy.

(d) ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGY APPLICATION GUIDE.—

(1) DEFINITION OF DEVELOPER.—In this section, the term ''developer'' means a developer of transmission facilities or transmission technologies, including a developer of transmission facilities or transmission technologies that pays to install advanced transmission technology with respect to those transmission facilities or transmission technologies.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF APPLICATION GUIDE.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish an application guide for utilities and developers seeking to implement advanced transmission technologies.

(3) UPDATES.—The guide established under paragraph (2) shall be reviewed and updated annually.

(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—On request of a utility or developer using the guide established under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall provide technical assistance to that utility or developer with respect to the use of advanced transmission technologies for particular applications.

(B) CLEARINGHOUSE.—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall establish a clearinghouse of previously completed advanced transmission technology projects that the Secretary, utilities, and developers may use to identify issues and solutions relating to the use of advanced transmission technologies for particular applications.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act, to remain available until expended—

(A) $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2026; and

(B) $1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2037.

SEC. 303. ELECTRICITY TRANSFORMERS.

(a) DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT.—There is authorized to be appropriated $2,100,000,000 for the President, acting through the Secretary of Energy, under the authority of title III of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4531 et seq.), to expand domestic manufacturing of transformers and grid components, including amorphous steel, grain-oriented electrical steel, flexible transformers, circuit breakers, switchgear and substations to serve load and interconnect generation, and inverters and optimizers to integrate the influx of distributed generators.

(b) STRATEGIC TRANSFORMER RESILIENCE PROGRAM.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(A) BULK-POWER SYSTEM; ELECTRIC RELIABILITY ORGANIZATION.—The terms ''bulk-power system'' and ''Electric Reliability Organization'' have the meanings given those terms in section 215(a) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824o(a)).

(B) INDEPENDENT SYSTEM OPERATOR; REGIONAL TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION; STATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—The terms ''Independent System Operator'', ''Regional Transmission Organization'', and ''State regulatory authority'' have the meanings given those terms in section 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

(C) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

(2) STRATEGY AND REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop a strategy, and submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report identifying methods—

(i) to ensure that large power transformers, generator step-up transformers, power conversion equipment, grain-oriented electrical steel, and other critical electric grid equipment is strategically located to ensure timely replacement of that equipment as necessary to rapidly restore operation and proper functioning of the electric grid in the event of severe damage to the electric grid due to physical attack, cyber attack, electromagnetic pulses, geomagnetic disturbances, severe weather, climate change, or seismic events; and

(ii) to facilitate the transportation of large power transformers, generator step-up transformers, power conversion equipment, grain-oriented electrical steel, and other critical electric grid equipment.

(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—In developing the strategy under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider the need for, and the feasibility of establishing, 1 or more federally owned strategic equipment reserves, as appropriate, to ensure nationwide access to large power transformers, generator step-up transformers, power conversion equipment, grain-oriented electrical steel, and other critical electric grid equipment.

(ii) EXISTING PROGRAMS.—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretary may consider existing spare transformer and equipment programs and requirements established by the private sector, Regional Transmission Organizations, Independent System Operators, and State regulatory authorities.

(C) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall consult with—

(i) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission;

(ii) the Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council;

(iii) the Electric Reliability Organization;

(iv) manufacturers of large power transformers, generator step-up transformers, power conversion equipment, grain-oriented electrical steel, and other critical electric grid equipment;

(v) owners and operators of critical electric infrastructure (as defined in section 215A(a) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824o–1(a))); and

(vi) owners and operators of military installations (as defined in section 2801(c) of title 10, United States Code) and defense sites (as defined in section 2710(e) of that title), including facilities designated as critical defense facilities under section 215A(c) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824o–1(c));

(3) TRANSFORMER RESILIENCE PROGRAM.—In addition to the strategy developed under subsection (b), the Secretary shall establish a program—

(A) to improve large power transformers, generator step-up transformers, power conversion equipment, grain-oriented electrical steel, and other critical electric grid equipment by reducing vulnerabilities identified with respect to that equipment;

(B) to develop, test, and deploy innovative equipment designs, including modular designs, that are more flexible and offer greater resiliency with respect to the operation and functioning of the electric grid;

(C) to coordinate with industry and manufacturers to standardize large power transformers, generator step-up transformers, power conversion equipment, and other critical electric grid equipment;

(D) to monitor and test large power transformers, generator step-up transformers, power conversion equipment, and other critical electric grid equipment that the Secretary determines may pose a risk to the bulk-power system or national security; and

(E) to facilitate the domestic manufacturing of large power transformers, generator step-up transformers, power conversion equipment, grain-oriented electrical steel, and other critical electric grid equipment through—

(i) the issuance of grants and loans; and

(ii) the provision of technical support.

(4) REQUIREMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—All laborers and mechanics employed by contractors or subcontractors in the performance of construction, alteration, or repair work carried out, in whole or in part, with financial assistance made available under this section shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a character similar in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code.

(B) AUTHORITY.—With respect to the labor standards specified in this subsection, the Secretary of Labor shall have the authority and functions set forth in Reorganization Plan Numbered 14 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1267; 5 U.S.C. App.) and section 3145 of title 40, United States Code.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection $75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 304. STREAMLINING PERMITTING OF DISTRIBUTED ENERGY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION.—The term "authority having jurisdiction" means any State, county, local, or Tribal office or official with jurisdiction—

(A) to issue permits relating to qualifying distributed energy systems;

(B) to conduct inspections to enforce the requirements of a relevant code or standard relating to qualifying distributed energy systems; or

(C) to approve the installation of, or the equipment and materials used in the installation of, qualifying distributed energy systems.

(2) QUALIFYING DISTRIBUTED ENERGY SYSTEM.—The term "qualifying distributed energy system" means any equipment or materials installed in,

on, or near a residential building to support onsite or local energy use, including—

(A) to generate electricity from distributed renewable energy sources, including from—

(i) solar photovoltaic systems or similar solar energy technologies; and

(ii) wind power systems;

(B) to store and discharge electricity from batteries with a capacity of at least 2 kilowatt hours;

(C) to charge a plug-in electric drive vehicle at a power rate of at least 2 kilowatts; or

(D) to refuel a hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicle.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

(b) PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with trade associations and other entities representing distributed energy system installers and organizations representing State, local, and Tribal governments engaged in permitting, shall carry out a program to further develop, expand, and support the adoption of a voluntary streamlined permitting and inspection process for authorities having jurisdiction to use for the permitting of qualifying distributed energy systems.

(c) ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAM.—In carrying out the program established under subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

(1) further develop and expand an exemplary streamlined permitting process that includes an online permitting platform—

(A) for expediting, standardizing, and streamlining permitting; and

(B) that authorities having jurisdiction may voluntarily use to receive, review, and approve permit applications relating to qualifying distributed energy systems;

(2) establish targets for the adoption of a streamlined, expedited permitting process by authorities having jurisdiction;

(3) provide technical assistance and training directly or indirectly to authorities having jurisdiction on using and adopting the exemplary streamlined permitting process described in paragraph (1), including the adoption of any necessary building codes;

(4) develop a voluntary inspection protocol and related tools to expedite, standardize, and streamline

the inspection of qualifying distributed energy systems, including—

(A) by investigating the potential for using remote inspections;

(B) by investigating the potential for sample-based inspection for distributed energy system installers with a demonstrated track record of high-quality work; and

(C) by investigating opportunities to integrate the voluntary inspection protocol into the online permitting platform described in paragraph (1) and the platforms of government software providers; and

(5) take any other action to expedite, standardize, streamline, or improve the process for permitting, inspecting, or interconnecting qualifying distributed energy systems.

(d) SUPPORT SERVICES.—The Secretary shall—

(1) support the provision of technical assistance to authorities having jurisdiction, any administrator of the online permitting platform described in subsection (c)(1), government software providers, and any other entity determined appropriate by the Secretary in carrying out the activities described in subsection (c); and

(2) provide such financial assistance as the Secretary determines appropriate from any funds appropriated to carry out this section.

(e) AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may certify authorities having jurisdiction that implement the exemplary streamlined permitting process described in subsection (c)(1).

(2) PROCESS.—The Secretary may confer a certification under paragraph (1) through existing programs within the Department of Energy.

(3) PRIZES.—The Secretary may award prizes to authorities having jurisdiction, using funds appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section, to encourage authorities having jurisdiction to adopt the exemplary streamlined permitting process or the voluntary inspection protocol established under paragraphs (1) and (4) of subsection (c), respectively.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section $20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2030.

SEC. 305. COMMUNITY SOLAR.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY SOLAR CONSUMER CHOICE PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a program to increase the opportunities for participation in community solar programs by—

(A) individuals, prioritizing individuals that do not have regular access to onsite solar, including low- and moderate-income individuals and individuals living in energy communities;

(B) businesses;

(C) nonprofit organizations; and

(D) States and local and Tribal governments.

(2) ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING FEDERAL PROGRAMS.—The Secretary shall align the program established under paragraph (1) with existing Federal programs that serve low-income communities.

(3) ASSISTANCE TO STATE, TRIBAL, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—In carrying out the program established under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) provide technical assistance to eligible entities for projects to increase the number of community solar facilities;

(B) assist eligible entities in the development of new and innovative financial and business models that leverage competitive processes in order to serve community solar subscribers; and

(C) use National Laboratories to collect and disseminate data to assist private entities in the financing of, subscription to, and operation of community solar programs.

(b) FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAMS.—The Secretary shall, as the Secretary determines appropriate, expand the existing grant, loan, and financing programs of the Department of Energy to include community solar programs.

(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 111(d) of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2621(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(22) COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAMS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Each electric utility shall offer a community solar program that provides all ratepayers, including low-income ratepayers, equitable and demonstrable access to such community solar program. Such programs may include community solar facilities owned or operated by non-utility entities and shall not restrict participation to utility-owned facilities.

"(B) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this paragraph:

"(i) COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAM.—The term 'community solar program' means a service provided to any electric consumer that the electric utility serves through which the value of electricity generated by a community solar facility may be used to reduce total charges billed to the electric consumer.

"(ii) COMMUNITY SOLAR FACILITY.—The term 'community solar facility' means a solar photovoltaic system that—

"(I) allocates electricity to multiple electric consumers of an electric utility;

"(II) is interconnected with the electric grid; and

"(III) is located either on or off the property of the electric consumers described in subclause (I).".

(2) COMPLIANCE.—

(A) TIME LIMITATIONS.—Section 112(b) of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2622(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(9)(A) Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this paragraph, each State regulatory authority (with respect to each electric utility for which the State has ratemaking authority) and each nonregulated electric utility shall commence consideration under section 111, or set a hearing date for consideration, with respect to the standard established by paragraph (22) of section 111(d).

"(B) Not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of this paragraph, each State regulatory authority (with respect to each electric utility for which the State has ratemaking authority), and each nonregulated electric utility shall complete the consideration and make the determination under section 111 with respect to the standard established by paragraph (22) of section 111(d).".

(B) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—Section 112(c) of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2622(c)) is amended—

(i) by striking ''subsection (b)(2)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)''; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following: ''In the case of the standard established by paragraph (22) of section 111(d), the reference contained in this subsection to the date of enactment of this Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the date of enactment of that paragraph (22).''.

(C) PRIOR STATE ACTIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Section 112 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2622) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(i) PRIOR STATE ACTIONS.—Subsections (b) and (c) shall not apply to the standard established by paragraph (22) of section 111(d) in the case of any electric utility in a State if, before the date of enactment of this subsection—

''(1) the State has implemented for the electric utility the standard (or a comparable standard);

''(2) the State regulatory authority for the State or the relevant nonregulated electric utility has conducted a proceeding to consider implementation of the standard (or a comparable standard) for the electric utility; or

"(3) the State legislature has voted on the implementation of the standard (or a comparable standard) for the electric utility.".

(ii) CROSS-REFERENCE.—Section 124 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2634) is amended by adding at the end the following: "In the case of the standard established by paragraph (22) of section 111(d), the reference contained in this subsection to the date of enactment of this Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the date of enactment of that paragraph (22).".

(d) FEDERAL CONTRACTS FOR PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES.—Section 501(b)(1) of title 40, United States Code, is amended by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

"(B) PUBLIC UTILITY CONTRACTS.—A contract under this paragraph for public utility services may be for a period of not more than 30 years.".

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMUNITY SOLAR FACILITY; COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAM.—The terms ''community solar facility'' and ''community solar program'' have the meaning given such terms in paragraph (22) of section 111(d) of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2621(d)), as added by subsection (c) of this section.

(2) COMMUNITY SOLAR SUBSCRIBER.—The term ''community solar subscriber'' means an electricity customer that receives or purchases a proportional share of the output of a community solar facility under an ownership, subscription, or power purchase arrangement approved by the applicable regulatory authority.

(3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means—

(A) a State or political subdivision of a State;

(B) a unit of local government;

(C) an Indian Tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304));

(D) a territory of the United States; or

(E) an authority, agency, or instrumentality of, or an entity owned by, 1 or more entities described in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

(4) ENERGY COMMUNITY.—The term ''energy community'' has the meaning given such term in section 45(b)(11) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 45(b)(11)).

(5) NATIONAL LABORATORIES.—The term ''National Laboratories'' has the meaning given the term in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801).

(6) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

SEC. 306. LOW-COST, CLEAN ENERGY IN UNITED STATES TERRITORIES.

(a) CLEAN ENERGY GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall establish a renewable energy program (in this section referred to as the ''program'') under which the Secretary may award grants to covered entities to facilitate projects, in territories of the United States, described in paragraph (3).

(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant under the program, a covered entity shall submit to

the Secretary an application at such time, in such form, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(3) GRANT USES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A covered entity receiving a grant under the program may use grant funds for a project, in a territory of the United States—

(i) to develop or construct a renewable energy system;

(ii) to carry out an activity to increase energy efficiency or demand flexibility;

(iii) to develop or construct an energy storage system or device for—

(I) a system developed or constructed under clause (i); or

(II) an activity carried out under clause (ii);

(iv) to develop or construct—

(I) a smart grid; or

(II) a microgrid; or

(v) to train residents of the territory of the United States to develop, construct, maintain, or operate a renewable energy system.

(B) LIMITATION.—A covered entity receiving a grant under the program may not use grant funds to develop or construct a facility that generates electricity using energy derived from fossil fuels.

(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of Energy shall ensure that Department of Energy national laboratories offer to provide technical assistance to each covered entity carrying out a project assisted with a grant under the program.

(5) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the establishment of the program, and on an annual basis thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing—

(A) an estimate of the amount of funds disbursed under the program;

(B) an estimate of the energy conservation achieved as a result of the program;

(C) a description of challenges encountered in implementing projects described in paragraph (3)(A);

(D) recommendations as to additional legislative measures to increase the use of renewable energy in territories of the United States, as appropriate;

(E) recommendations for improving resilience and dependability of projects described in paragraph (3)(A);

(F) recommendations for furthering the long-term energy independence of U.S. territories covered by this program; and

(G) findings regarding the effect of this program on consumer energy prices and how it can be improved to continue lowering those prices.

(6) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(b) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) STUDY AND REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(i) conduct a study regarding renewable energy, energy efficiency, and demand flexibility in territories of the United States; and

(ii) submit to Congress a report containing—

(I) the findings of the study; and

(II) related recommendations.

(B) COMPONENTS.—The study conducted under subparagraph (A) shall consider, in relation to each territory of the United States, the potential—

(i) to modify existing electric power systems to use renewable energy sources;

(ii) to expand the use of microgrids; and

(iii) to improve energy resiliency.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated $1,500,000 to carry out this section.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act, the following definitions apply:

(1) COVERED ENTITY.—The term ''covered entity'' means a not-for-profit organization determined eligible by the Secretary of Agriculture for purposes of this Act.

(2) DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL LABORATORIES.—The term ''Department of Energy national laboratories'' has the same meaning as the term ''National Laboratory'' under section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801).

(3) MICROGRID.—The term ''microgrid'' means an electric system—

(A) that serves the local community with a power generation and distribution system; and

(B) that has the ability—

(i) to disconnect from a traditional electric grid; and

(ii) to operate autonomously when disconnected.

(4) RENEWABLE ENERGY; RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEM.—The terms ''renewable energy'' and ''renewable energy system'' have the meanings given those terms in section 9001 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8101).

(5) SMART GRID.—The term ''smart grid'' means an intelligent electric grid that uses digital communications technology, information systems, and automation to, while maintaining high system reliability—

(A) detect and react to local changes in usage;

(B) improve system operating efficiency; and

(C) reduce spending costs.

(6) TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES.—The term ''territory of the United States'' means the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

TITLE IV—BUILDING OUT A 21ST CENTURY ELECTRICITY GRID

Subtitle A—Amendments to the Federal Power Act

SEC. 401. DEFINITIONS.

Section 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(30) ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT.—The term 'energy storage project' means equipment that receives, stores, and delivers energy-using batteries, compressed air, pumped hydropower, hydrogen storage (including hydrolysis), thermal energy storage, regenerative fuel cells, flywheels, capacitors, superconducting magnets, or other technologies identified by the Secretary of Energy.

''(31) GENERATING FACILITY.—The term 'generating facility' means any facility that generates electricity.

''(32) GENERATOR TIE LINE.—The term 'generator tie line' means a dedicated transmission line that is used to transmit power from a generating facility or an energy storage project to a transmission facility or a transmission system.

"(33) GREENHOUSE GAS.—The term 'greenhouse gas' includes each of the following:

"(A) Carbon dioxide.

"(B) Methane.

"(C) Nitrous oxide.

"(D) Sulfur hexafluoride.

"(E) Any hydrofluorocarbon.

"(F) Any perfluorocarbon.

"(G) Nitrogen trifluoride.

"(H) Any fully fluorinated linear, branched, or cyclic—

"(i) alkane;

"(ii) ether;

"(iii) tertiary amine; or

"(iv) aminoether.

"(I) Any perfluoropolyether.

"(J) Any hydrofluoropolyether.

"(K) Any other fluorocarbon, except for a fluorocarbon with a vapor pressure of less than 1 mm of Hg absolute at 25 degrees Celsius.

"(34) ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGY.—The term 'advanced transmission technology' means any hardware or software that—

"(A) increases the capacity, efficiency, reliability, resilience, or safety of transmission facilities and transmission technologies;

"(B) is installed in addition to new or existing transmission facilities and transmission technologies—

"(i) to give operators of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more situational awareness and control over the electric grid;

"(ii) to make the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more efficient; or

"(iii) to increase the transfer capacity of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies; and

"(C) includes, but is not limited to, dynamic line ratings, advanced conductors, topology optimization, advanced power-flow controls, and other digital or physical systems that increase the usable transfer capability of the grid.

"(35) INTERCONNECTION CUSTOMER.—The term 'interconnection customer' means an entity, or any affiliates or subsidiaries of an entity, that proposes to interconnect a generating facility or an energy storage project to a transmission facility or transmission system.

"(36) TRANSMISSION BENEFITS.—The term 'transmission benefits' means the broad range of economic, operational, safety, resilience, public policy, and environmental benefits (as assessed by the Commission in accordance with section 224(e)) and other reasonably anticipated benefits of constructing, modifying, or operating a transmission facility, including—

"(A) improved reliability;

"(B) improved resilience;

"(C) improved safety;

"(D) reduced congestion;

"(E) reduced power losses;

"(F) greater carrying capacity;

"(G) reduced operating reserve requirements;

"(H) improved access to lower-cost electricity generation;

“(I) improved access to electricity generating facilities with no direct emissions of greenhouse gases;

“(J) improved public health from the closure of electricity generation facilities that emit harmful pollution;

“(K) increased competition and market liquidity in electricity markets;

“(L) improved energy resilience and resilience of Department of Defense installations;

“(M) improved ability to integrate new sources of electrical demand; and

“(N) other potential benefits of increasing the interconnectedness of the electric grid.

“(37) NETWORK UPGRADE.—The term ‘network upgrade’ means—

“(A) any addition to or expansion of any transmission facility or transmission system;

“(B) the construction of a new transmission facility that will become part of a transmission system;

“(C) the addition of an energy storage project to a transmission facility or a transmission system; or

‘‘(D) any construction, deployment, or addition of an advanced transmission technology to a transmission facility or a transmission system that eliminates or reduces the need to carry out any of the activities described in subparagraphs (A) through (C).

‘‘(38) PARTICIPANT FUNDING.—The term ‘participant funding’ means any cost allocation method under which an interconnection customer is required to pay, without reimbursement, all or a disproportionate amount of the costs of a network upgrade that is determined by the Commission to be necessary to ensure the reliable interconnection of the interconnection customer’s generating facility or energy storage project.

‘‘(39) TRANSMISSION PLANNING REGION.—The term ‘transmission planning region’ means—

‘‘(A) when used in a geographical sense, a region for which the Commission determines that electric transmission planning is appropriate, such as a region established in accordance with Order No. 1000 of the Commission, entitled ‘Transmission Planning and Cost Allocation by Transmission Owning and Operating

Public Utilities' (76 Fed. Reg. 49842 (August 11, 2011)); and

"(B) when used in a corporate sense, means the Transmission Organization or other entity responsible for planning or operating electric transmission facilities within a region described in subparagraph (A).

"(40) TRANSMISSION SYSTEM.—For purposes of sections 224 and 227, the term 'transmission system' means a network of transmission facilities used for the transmission of electric energy in interstate commerce.".

SEC. 402. INTERREGIONAL ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION PLANNING.

Part II of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 224. IMPROVING INTERREGIONAL ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION PLANNING.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Commission shall issue regulations that require each pair or grouping of neighboring transmission planning regions to jointly develop and file with the Commission a process by which they will develop an interregional transmission plan to identify and to facilitate the construction or upgrade of onshore and offshore electric transmission facilities that are efficient, cost-effective, and broadly beneficial. Such process must address the considerations in subsection (b) and be filed within 6 months after the regulations required by this paragraph are finalized. Such process must require development of an interregional transmission plan within at least 3 years of the promulgation of the regulations and that a new plan be developed at least every 3 years thereafter, in alignment with long-term regional transmission plans developed under Orders 1920 and 1920–A (89 Fed. Reg. 49280 and 89 Fed. Reg. 97174).

''(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining the requirements for a process described in subsection (a), the Commission shall require that such process advance—

''(1) the development of transmission systems that can operate for a minimum of 20 years and across a wide range of scenarios, including scenarios that take into account—

''(A) Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, and other factors that affect electricity demand and the current and future generation resource mix;

''(B) trends in technology and fuel costs;

"(C) the retirement of generation facilities, energy storage projects, and transmission facilities;

"(D) generator interconnection requests and withdrawals; and

"(E) extreme weather events, including in anticipation of how the frequency and intensity of these events are projected to change over the planning period due to climate change;

"(2) the public interest;

"(3) the integrity of electricity markets;

"(4) the protection of consumers;

"(5) the optimization of transmission benefits;

"(6) the need for an individual interregional transmission project to secure approvals based on a comprehensive assessment of the multiple benefits provided;

"(7) the importance of synchronization of planning processes in neighboring transmission planning regions, such as using a joint model on a consistent timeline with a single set of needs, input assumptions, and benefit metrics;

"(8) the need for an individual interregional transmission project that is identified in the interregional transmission plan of a pair of transmission planning regions not to be subject to any subsequent planning process by other transmission planning regions;

"(9) that evaluation of long-term scenarios should align with the expected life of an element of a transmission system;

"(10) that a pair of transmission planning regions should allow for the identification and joint evaluation of alternatives proposed by stakeholders, and ensure meaningful opportunities for States, Tribes, consumer advocates, labor organizations, and environmental justice communities to participate;

"(11) the need to eliminate arbitrary project voltage, size, or cost requirements for transmission projects;

"(12) the applicability of a broad range of alternatives to the construction of transmission facilities, including advanced transmission technologies, demand side flexibility, distributed storage, load management, dynamic line rating, and power flow control; and

"(13) the use of data and analyses provided by the Secretary of Energy, including as provided by the National Laboratories, regarding any of the items described in paragraphs (1) through (12).

"(c) REPORT.—Not later than 12 months after the issuance of regulations under subsection (a) and annually thereafter, the Commission shall publish in the Federal Register a report on the progress by each pair of transmission planning regions in identifying and facilitating the construction of interregional electric transmission projects, including a description of the transmission benefits associated with such projects.

"(d) ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS.—In assessing the environmental benefits associated with any activity undertaken pursuant to this Act, the Commission may use any relevant analysis or other information conducted or provided by the Council on Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency.".

SEC. 403. ALLOCATION OF COSTS OF ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION FACILITIES OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.

Part II of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 225. ALLOCATION OF COSTS OF TRANSMISSION FACILITIES OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.

"(a) ALLOCATION OF COSTS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Any transmitting utility that owns, controls, or operates a transmission facility of national significance, or proposes to own, control, or operate a transmission facility of national significance, may file a tariff with the Commission in accordance with section 205 allocating the costs of constructing, modifying, and operating such transmission facility of national significance in accordance with paragraph (2).

"(2) COST ALLOCATION PRINCIPLE.—The Commission shall require that any tariff described in paragraph (1) allocate the cost to construct, modify, and operate a transmission facility of national significance to customers within the applicable transmission planning region or regions in a manner that is roughly commensurate with the reasonably anticipated transmission benefits. Additionally, the Commission shall require that any proposed calculation of reasonably anticipated transmission benefits make the assumptions and calculations behind such calculation public and included in any tariff described in paragraph (1).

"(3) COMMISSION AUTHORITY.—If the Commission determines that no tariff filed under paragraph (1) provides for a just, reasonable, and not unduly discriminatory allocation of costs for a transmission facility of national significance, the Commission may, after notice and opportunity for hearing, establish or modify such allocation under section 206, provided, however, that nothing in this section shall prevent a transmitting utility from recovering such costs through voluntary agreement with its customers.

''(b) DEFINITION OF TRANSMISSION FACILITY OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.—In this section, the term 'transmission facility of national significance' means—

''(1) an interstate or interregional electric power transmission line (and any facilities necessary for the operation of such electric power transmission line)—

''(A) that has a transmission capacity of not less than 1,000 megawatts; and

''(B) the construction of which is completed on or after the date of enactment of this section;

''(2) an electric power transmission line or network, located in whole or in part offshore (including any radial, meshed, or shared facilities necessary for its operation), the construction of which is completed on or after the date of enactment of this section; or

''(3) an expansion of, or upgrade to, an interstate electric power transmission line (and any facilities necessary for the operation of such electric power transmission line) that—

"(A) increases the transmission capacity of such electric power transmission line by at least 500 megawatts; and

"(B) the construction of which is completed on or after the date of enactment of this section.

"(c) SAVINGS PROVISION.—This section does not affect the authority of the Commission to approve the allocation of costs of transmission facilities other than transmission facilities of national significance.".

SEC. 404. MINIMUM INTERREGIONAL TRANSFER CAPABILITY.

Part II of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 226. PROTECTING ELECTRICITY RELIABILITY BY IMPROVING INTERREGIONAL TRANSFER CAPABILITY.

"(a) RULEMAKING.—Notwithstanding the requirements of section 322 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (Public Law 118–5), not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act, the Commission shall, pursuant to section 206, issue regulations that establish requirements for minimum transfer capability, as described under subsection (b), between transmission planning regions.

"(b) MINIMUM TRANSFER CAPABILITY.—The aggregate minimum interregional transfer capability for each transmission planning region and its neighboring transmission planning region shall be not less than 30 percent of its own peak electricity demand, or in the case of a transmission planning region that borders only 1 other transmission planning region, not less than 15 percent of its own peak electricity demand, unless the Commission finds, upon a showing by a transmission planning region, that a lower transfer capability can achieve the same or greater transmission benefits.

"(c) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this section and every 5 years thereafter, the Commission shall report to Congress on the status of interregional transfer capability, including on risks to reliability associated with a lack of interregional transfer capability.".

SEC. 405. INCREASED FERC TRANSMISSION SITING AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part II of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 227. SITING OF CERTAIN INTERSTATE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION FACILITIES.

"(a) CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—On receipt of an application under subsection (b)(1) relating to a transmission facility of national significance described in paragraph (2), the Commission, after making the finding described in paragraph (3) with respect to such transmission facility of national significance, shall, by order which is published in the Federal Register, issue to the person who submitted such application a certificate of public convenience and necessity for the construction, modification, or operation of such transmission facility of national significance, subject to such reasonable terms and conditions as the Commission determines to be appropriate.

"(2) TRANSMISSION FACILITY OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE DESCRIBED.—A transmission facility of national significance referred to in paragraph (1) is an interstate or interregional electric power transmission line (and any facilities necessary for the operation of such electric power transmission line)—

"(A) that has a transmission capacity of not less than 1,000 megawatts; and

"(B) the construction of which is completed on or after the date of enactment of this section.

"(3) FINDING DESCRIBED.—The finding referred to in paragraph (1) is a finding that—

"(A) the applicant for a certificate of public convenience and necessity is able and willing—

"(i) to carry out the activities and perform the services proposed in the application in a manner determined to be appropriate by the Commission; and

"(ii) to achieve compliance with the applicable requirements of—

"(I) this part; and

"(II) any rules and regulations promulgated by the Commission pursuant to this part;

"(B) the transmission facility of national significance to be constructed, modified, or operated under the certificate of public convenience and necessity will—

"(i) be interstate or interregional;

"(ii) be used for the transmission of electric energy in interstate commerce; and "(iii) have a transmission capacity of not less than 1,000 megawatts.

"(4) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Commission shall issue regulations specifying—

"(A) a pre-filing process during which a person described in subsection (b)(1) and the Commission shall consult with—

"(i) the State commission for each State through which the applicable transmission facility of national significance will traverse;

"(ii) appropriate Federal agencies;

"(iii) each Indian Tribe that may be affected by the proposed project to construct, modify, or operate a transmission facility of national significance; and

"(iv) the appropriate Transmission Organization;

"(B) the form of, and information to be contained in, an application submitted under subsection (b)(1);

"(C) requirements for determining whether the applicable transmission facility of national significance will—

''(i) traverse not fewer than 2 States;

''(ii) be used for the transmission of electric energy in interstate commerce; and

''(iii) have a power capacity of not less than 1,000 megawatts;

''(D) criteria for determining the reasonable and economical use of—

''(i) existing rights-of-way; and

''(ii) the transmission capabilities of existing towers or structures;

''(E) the manner in which an application submitted under subsection (b)(1) shall be considered, which, to the extent practicable, shall be consistent with State statutory and regulatory policies concerning generation and retail sales of electricity in the States in which the electric energy transmitted by the transmission facility of national significance will be generated or sold; and

''(F) the manner in which the Commission will consider the needs of communities that will be impacted directly by the applicable transmission facility of national significance, including how any impacts of the transmission facility of national significance could be mitigated or offset.

"(5) PUBLICATION, PUBLIC COMMENT, AND HEARINGS FOR CERTAIN NOTICE OF INTENT AND DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS.—

"(A) PUBLICATION.—The Commission shall publish in the Federal Register a notice of intent to prepare an environmental document under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) with respect to an application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity that has been submitted under subsection (b)(1).

"(B) PUBLIC COMMENT.—The Commission shall provide not less than 60 days for public comment on each notice of intent and draft environmental impact statement published under subparagraph (A).

"(C) HEARING.—The Commission shall provide to the individuals and entities described in paragraph (6)(B) a reasonable opportunity for presentation, in at least 1 public hearing, of any views and recommendations on each notice of intent and each draft environmental impact statement published under subparagraph (A).

The Commission shall publish in the Federal Register notice of any hearing held under this subparagraph.

"(6) NOTICE AND OPPORTUNITY FOR A HEARING ON APPLICATIONS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—In any proceeding before the Commission to consider an application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity under this section, the Commission shall—

"(i) publish a notice of the application in the Federal Register;

"(ii) provide written notice of such application to all affected landowners in accordance with subsection (c); and

"(iii) provide to the individuals and entities described in subparagraph (B) a notice and reasonable opportunity for the presentation in at least 1 public hearing of any views and recommendations with respect to the need for, and impact of, the construction, modification, or operation of the transmission facility of national significance proposed to be constructed, modified, or operated under the certificate.

"(B) INDIVIDUALS AND ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—The individuals and entities referred to in subparagraph (A) are—

"(i) an agency, selected by the Governor (or equivalent official) of the applicable State, of each State in which the transmission facility of national significance proposed to be constructed, modified, or operated under the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity is or will be located;

"(ii) each affected landowner; and

"(iii) as determined by the Commission—

"(I) each affected Federal agency; and

"(II) each Indian Tribe that may be affected by the proposed construction, modification, or operation.

"(C) PROHIBITION.—The Commission may not—

"(i) require an applicant for a certificate of public convenience and necessity under this section to provide any notice required under this section; or ''(ii) enter into a contract to provide any notice required under this section with—

''(I) the applicant for the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity; or

''(II) any other person that has a financial interest in the project proposed in the application for such certificate.

''(b) APPLICATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A person desiring a certificate of public convenience and necessity under this section shall submit to the Commission an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Commission may require.

''(2) REQUIREMENT.—An application submitted to the Commission under paragraph (1) shall include all information necessary for the Commission to make the finding described in subsection (a)(3).

''(c) NOTICE TO AFFECTED LANDOWNERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall provide written notice of an application submitted under subsection (b)(1) to all affected landowners with respect to the transmission facility of national significance for which such application was submitted in accordance with this subsection.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—Any notice provided to an affected landowner under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

“(A) The following statement in 14-point bold typeface:

“ ‘The [name of applicant] has proposed building power lines that will cross your property, and may also require building transmission towers on your property. If the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approves [applicant]’s proposed project, then [applicant] may have the right to build transmission towers on, and power lines over, your property, or use your property to construct the proposed project, subject to paying you just compensation for the loss of your property.

“ ‘If you want to raise objections to, offer support for, or otherwise comment on this, or otherwise comment on this project, you can do so by submitting written comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Docket No. [______]. You can do this electronically or by mail. To do so electronically [to be inserted by the Commission]. To do so by mail [to be inserted by the Commission].'.

"(B) A description of the proposed project to construct, modify, or operate a transmission facility of national significance, including—

"(i) the location of the proposed project (including a general location map);

"(ii) the purpose of the proposed project; and

"(iii) the timing of the proposed project.

"(C) The name of, and the location in the docket of the Commission at which may be found, each submission by the applicant to the Commission relating to the proposed project.

"(D) A general description of what the applicant will need from the landowner if the proposed project is approved, including the activities the applicant may undertake and the facilities that the applicant may seek to construct on the property of the landowner.

"(E) A description of how the landowner may contact the applicant, including—

"(i) a website;

"(ii) an email address;

"(iii) a local or toll-free telephone number; and

"(iv) the name of a specific person to contact who is knowledgeable about the proposed project.

"(F) A description of how the landowner may contact the Commission, including—

"(i) a website;

"(ii) an email address;

"(iii) a local or toll-free telephone number; and

"(iv) the name of a specific person to contact who is knowledgeable about the proposed project.

"(G) A summary of the rights that the landowner has—

"(i) before the Commission; and

"(ii) in other proceedings under—

"(I) the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure; and

"(II) the eminent domain rules of the relevant State.

"(H) Any other information that the Commission determines to be appropriate.

"(3) OBLIGATION OF APPLICANT.—An applicant for a certificate of public convenience and necessity under this section shall submit to the Commission, together with the application for the certificate, the name and address of each affected landowner.

"(d) REGULATORY JURISDICTION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2) and notwithstanding section 216(i), no State shall regulate any aspect of the siting or permitting of a transmission facility of national significance constructed, modified, or operated under a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued under this section.

"(2) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section affects the rights of States under—

"(A) the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.);

"(B) the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.);

"(C) the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.); or

"(D) division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code (formerly known as the 'National Historic Preservation Act').

"(3) TRIBAL CONSENT FOR CERTAIN RIGHTS-OF-WAY.—No right-of-way over or across Tribal land may be granted pursuant to this section unless consent for the right-of-way has been obtained from the proper Tribal official in a manner consistent with the requirements of section 2 of the Act of February 5, 1948 (62 Stat. 18, chapter 45; 25 U.S.C. 324).

"(e) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Any person aggrieved by an order of the Commission issued under this section may obtain review of the order in—

"(A) the court of appeals of the United States for any judicial circuit in which the transmission facility of national significance to be constructed, modified, or operated under the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity is or will be located; or

"(B) the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

"(2) PETITION FOR REVIEW.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—A person may obtain review under paragraph (1) by filing in the applicable court a written petition praying that the order of the Commission be modified or set aside in whole or in part.

"(B) TIMING.—A petition under subparagraph (A) shall be filed by not later than 60 days after the date on which the applicable order of the Commission is published in the Federal Register.

"(3) PERSON AGGRIEVED.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, a person aggrieved by an order of the Commission issued under this section need not—

"(A) have been a party to the proceedings before the Commission in which that order was issued in order to obtain judicial review of the order under this subsection; or

"(B) have requested rehearing before the Commission prior to seeking judicial review.

"(f) RIGHT OF EMINENT DOMAIN FOR ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION FACILITIES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The holder of a certificate of public convenience and necessity may acquire through the exercise of the right of eminent domain in a court described in paragraph (2) any right-of-way, land, or other property that is necessary to construct, modify, or operate a transmission facility of national significance in accordance with such certificate if the holder has, in the determination of the

Commission, made good faith efforts to engage with landowners and other stakeholders early in the permitting process established under this section, and—

''(A) cannot acquire the necessary right-of-way, land, or other property by contract;

''(B) is unable to agree with the owner of the right-of-way, land, or other property with respect to the compensation to be paid for that right-of-way, land, or other property; or

''(C) cannot clear defective title with respect to the right-of-way, land, or other property.

''(2) COURT DESCRIBED.—A court referred to in paragraph (1) is—

''(A) the district court of the United States for the district in which the applicable right-of-way, land, or other property is located; or

''(B) the appropriate State court.

''(3) NOTICE OF ORDER ISSUING CERTIFICATE.—The holder of a certificate of public convenience and necessity may not exercise the right of eminent domain under this subsection with respect to any property covered by the certificate unless the Commission has first, in addition to publishing the notice of certificate of public convenience and necessity in the Federal Register, provided all affected landowners with notice of—

"(A) the order; and

"(B) the procedures for obtaining judicial review of such order under subsection (e), including a description of the time period for seeking judicial review under that subsection.

"(g) CONDEMNATION PROCEDURES.—

"(1) APPRAISALS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—A holder of, or applicant for, a certificate of public convenience and necessity shall have any property that the holder or applicant seeks to acquire through the exercise of the right of eminent domain under subsection (f) appraised in accordance with generally accepted appraisal standards by an appraiser selected by the owner of the property, subject to subparagraph (D).

"(B) REQUIREMENTS.—

"(i) COSTS.—The applicable holder of, or applicant for, a certificate of public convenience and necessity shall pay for each appraisal carried out under subparagraph (A).

"(ii) INSPECTIONS.—The owner of the applicable property (or a designated representative of the owner) shall be given the opportunity to accompany the appraiser during any inspection of the property that is part of an appraisal under subparagraph (A).

"(C) TIMING.—An appraisal under subparagraph (A) shall be carried out before—

"(i) the holder of, or applicant for, the certificate of public convenience and necessity makes an offer of just compensation under paragraph (2); or

"(ii) the holder of the certificate of public convenience and necessity commences an action or proceeding to exercise the right of eminent domain under subsection (f).

"(D) SELECTION OF APPRAISER.—If the owner of the applicable property does not select an appraiser under subparagraph (A) by the date that is 60 days after the date on which the holder of, or applicant for, the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity requests that the owner do so, the holder or applicant shall have the right to select the appraiser.

"(2) OFFERS OF JUST COMPENSATION.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Any offer of just compensation made to an affected landowner of property that is or will be covered by a certificate of public convenience and necessity—

"(i) shall be made in writing;

"(ii) may not be for an amount less than the fair market value of the property, as determined by an appraisal carried out under paragraph (1); and

"(iii) shall include compensation for—

"(I) any lost income from the property; and

"(II) any damages to any other property of the owner.

"(B) TIMING.—The holder of a certificate of public convenience and necessity may not make an offer of just compensation to an affected landowner until the date that is 30 days after the date on which the Commission provides a notice to the affected landowner under subsection (f)(3).

"(3) JURISDICTIONAL LIMITATIONS.—

"(A) MINIMUM JURISDICTIONAL AMOUNT.—A district court of the United States shall only have jurisdiction of an action or proceeding to exercise the right of eminent domain under subsection (f) if the amount claimed by the owner of the property to be condemned exceeds $3,000.

"(B) TRIBAL LAND.—A district court of the United States shall have no jurisdiction to condemn any interest in Tribal land.

"(4) LIMITATION ON CONDEMNATION.—In any action or proceeding to exercise the right of eminent domain under subsection (f), a court—

"(A) may condemn an interest in property only to the extent necessary for the specific facilities described in the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity; and

"(B) may not—

"(i) condemn any other interest; or

"(ii) condemn an interest for any purpose not described in that certificate.

"(5) RIGHT OF POSSESSION.—With respect to any action or proceeding to exercise the right of eminent domain under subsection (f), an owner of property that is covered by the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity shall not be required to surrender possession of that property unless the holder of the certificate—

"(A) has paid to the owner the award of compensation in the action or proceeding; or

"(B) has deposited the amount of that award with the court.

"(6) LITIGATION COSTS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—A holder of a certificate of public convenience and necessity that commences an action or proceeding to exercise the right of eminent domain under subsection (f) shall be liable to the owner of any property condemned in that proceeding for the costs described in subparagraph (B) if the amount awarded to that owner for the property condemned is more than 125 percent of the amount offered to the owner by the holder before the commencement of that action or proceeding.

"(B) COSTS DESCRIBED.—The costs referred to in subparagraph (A) are litigation costs incurred for the action or proceeding described in that subparagraph by the owner of the property condemned, including—

''(i) reasonable attorney fees;

''(ii) expert witness fees and costs; and

''(iii) reasonable travel costs to participate in proceedings.

''(h) ENFORCEMENT OF CONDITIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An affected landowner the property of which has been acquired by eminent domain under subsection (f) shall have the right—

''(A) to enforce any condition in the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity; and

''(B) to seek damages for a violation of any condition described in subparagraph (A).

''(2) JURISDICTION.—The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction over any action arising under paragraph (1).

''(i) OTHER LANDOWNER RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS.—

''(1) FAILURE TO TIMELY COMPLETE PROJECTS.—

''(A) SURRENDER OF CONDEMNED PROPERTY.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—An individual or entity from which an interest in property is acquired through the exercise of the right of eminent domain under subsection (f) by the holder of a certificate of public convenience and necessity that is issued for the construction, modification, or operation of a transmission facility of national significance may demand that the holder of the certificate surrender that interest to that individual or entity if—

"(I)(aa) the transmission facility of national significance is not in operation (as modified, in the case of a modification of a transmission facility of national significance) by the date specified in the certificate (including any modification of the certificate by the Commission); and

"(bb) there is no request for the extension of that date pending before the Commission; or

"(II) subject to clause (ii), the holder of the certificate, with the approval of the Commission, abandons the portion of the transmission facility of national significance that is located on the applicable property relating to that interest.

"(ii) REQUIREMENT.—The Commission may not approve in a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued under this section or in any subsequent proceeding the abandonment of all or any part of a transmission facility of national significance unless the Commission requires the holder of the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity to offer to each individual or entity described in clause (i) the option of having the property acquired from that individual or entity as described in that clause restored to the condition that the property was in prior to the issuance of the certificate.

"(B) REPAYMENT OF CONDEMNATION AWARD.—If an individual or entity described in subparagraph (A)(i) demands the surrender of an interest under that subparagraph, the holder of the applicable certificate of public convenience and necessity shall be entitled to repayment of an amount equal to not more than 50 percent of the condemnation award relating to the interest.

"(C) JURISDICTION.—The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction over any action arising under this paragraph.

"(2) MATERIAL MISREPRESENTATIONS.—

"(A) RESCISSION OF TRANSACTION.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—An individual or entity from which an interest in property is acquired through the exercise of the right of eminent domain under subsection (f) that proves, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the individual or entity has granted a right-of-way or any other property interest based on a material misrepresentation made by or on behalf of an applicant for, or holder of, a certificate of public convenience and necessity under this section concerning the transmission facility of national significance to be constructed, modified, or operated under the certificate shall have the right to rescind the transaction.

"(ii) JURISDICTION.—The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction over any action arising under clause (i).

"(B) CIVIL PENALTIES.—A material misrepresentation made by an applicant for, or holder of, a certificate of public convenience and necessity, or on behalf of such an applicant or holder, to an affected landowner concerning the transmission facility of national significance to be constructed, modified, or operated under the certificate, shall be considered to be a violation of this part for purposes of section 316A and such applicant or holder shall be assessed a civil penalty by the Commission in accordance with such section 316A, except the amount of such civil penalty may not exceed $10,000 per affected landowner to whom the misrepresentation was made.

"(j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) AFFECTED LANDOWNER.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'affected landowner' includes each owner of a property interest in land or other property described in subparagraph (B), including—

"(i) the Federal Government;

"(ii) a State or local government; and

"(iii) each owner noted in the most recent county or city tax record as receiving the relevant tax notice with respect to that interest.

"(B) LAND AND OTHER PROPERTY DESCRIBED.—The land or other property described in this subparagraph is any land or other property—

"(i) that is directly affected by the proposed construction, modification, or operation of a transmission facility of national significance, including all facility sites;

"(ii) that is located within the greater of—

"(I) 0.25 miles from a proposed facility site for a transmission facility of national significance; or

"(II) a minimum distance from the proposed transmission facility of national significance as specified by State law; or

"(iii) contains a residence that is within 3,000 feet of a proposed facility site for a transmission facility of national significance.

"(2) ALTERNATING CURRENT TRANSMISSION FACILITY.—The term 'alternating current transmission facility' means a transmission facility that uses alternating current for the bulk transmission of electric energy.

"(3) ELECTRIC POWER TRANSMISSION LINE.—The term 'electric power transmission line' means, as applicable—

"(A) an alternating current transmission facility;

"(B) a high-voltage, direct current transmission facility; or

"(C) infrastructure associated with an alternating current transmission facility or a high-voltage, direct current transmission facility, including substations and switchyards.

"(4) FACILITY SITE.—The term 'facility site' includes—

"(A) an area covered by a right-of-way;

"(B) an access road;

"(C) a contractor yard where equipment and material are stored or where assembly work is conducted; and

''(D) any temporary workspace.

''(5) HIGH-VOLTAGE, DIRECT CURRENT TRANSMISSION FACILITY.—The term 'high-voltage, direct current transmission facility' means a transmission facility that uses direct current for the bulk transmission of electric energy.

''(6) TRIBAL LAND.—The term 'Tribal land' has the meaning given the term 'Indian land' in section 2601 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (25 U.S.C. 3501).''.

(b) CONFORMING CHANGES TO THE FEDERAL POWER ACT.—

(1) SITING OF INTERSTATE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION FACILITIES.—Section 216 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824p) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)(2), by inserting ''(including transmission of electric energy from the outer Continental Shelf to a State)'' after ''interstate commerce''; and

(B) in subsection (h)—

(i) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

''(2) LEAD AGENCY.—For the purposes of coordinating all applicable Federal authorizations and related environmental reviews—

‘‘(A) the Commission shall act as the lead agency in the case of—

‘‘(i) except as provided in subparagraph (B), a transmission facility of national significance in a national interest electric transmission corridor designated by the Secretary under subsection (a); or

‘‘(ii) a transmission facility of national significance for which an application has been submitted for a certificate of public convenience and necessity under section 227;

‘‘(B) the Department of the Interior shall act as the lead agency in the case of a transmission facility of national significance in a national interest electric transmission corridor designated by the Secretary under subsection (a) that is located on a lease, easement, or right-of-way granted by the Secretary of the Interior under section 8(p)(1)(C) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1337(p)(1)(C)); and

‘‘(C) the Department of Energy shall act as the lead agency in the case of any other transmission facility of national significance.’’;

(ii) in each of paragraphs (3), (4)(B), (4)(C), (5)(B), (6)(A), (7)(A), (8)(A)(i), and (9), by striking ‘‘Secretary’’ each place it appears and inserting ‘‘applicable lead agency’’;

(iii) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking ‘‘As head of the lead agency, the Secretary’’ and inserting ‘‘The applicable lead agency’’;

(iv) in paragraph (5)(A), by striking ‘‘As lead agency head, the Secretary’’ and inserting ‘‘The applicable lead agency’’; and

(v) in paragraph (7)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by striking ‘‘after the date of enactment of this section’’ and inserting ‘‘after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act’’; and

(II) in subparagraph (B), by amending clause (i) to read as follows:

‘‘(i) Not later than six months after the date of enactment of the Energy Bills Relief Act, the Secretary, the Commission, and the heads of all Federal agencies with authority to issue Federal authorizations shall enter into a memorandum of understanding to ensure the timely and coordinated review and permitting of electric transmission facilities.''.

(2) TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT.—Section 219(b)(4)(B) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824s(b)(4)(B)) is amended by striking ''section 216'' and inserting ''sections 216 and 227''.

SEC. 406. PROHIBITING EXPENSIVE, UNJUST QUEUE JUMPING.

Part II of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 228. LIMITATION ON CERTAIN PROCEDURES TO EXPEDITE INTERCONNECTION REQUESTS.

''(a) LIMITATION.—The Commission may not establish or authorize a covered procedure unless—

''(1) the Commission finds, by clear and convincing evidence and in accordance with subsection (b), that reliance upon existing procedures for processing interconnection requests would jeopardize the reliable operation of the bulk-power system by failing to address predicted demand for electric energy;

''(2) such covered procedure—

"(A) provides only for a one-time opportunity to submit applications for generators to interconnect with the bulk power system;

"(B) only allows for the adjustment of a generator interconnection queue to prioritize an interconnection on the basis of the potential for such interconnection to address the continued reliable operation of the bulk-power system, as determined by the Commission consistent with subsection (c); and

"(C) does not provide for the prioritization of generating facilities or energy storage systems based upon the means by which the energy is generated or stored, respectively.

"(b) FINDING REQUIREMENTS.—In making the finding under subsection (a)(1), the Commission shall—

"(1) use predictions of growth in the demand for electric energy that are based on the best available data and account for the possibility of duplicative load interconnection requests by customers with high demand for electric energy, including by averaging such predictions if there is a range; and

"(2) account for the energy generation and storage capacity likely to enter commercial operation by using surplus interconnection service and generator replacement or interconnection right transfer processes.

“(c) DETERMINATIONS FOR PRIORITY.—To make a determination referred to in subsection (a)(2)(B), the Commission must determine—

“(1) the adjustment of a generator interconnection queue has the demonstrated ability to allow a prioritized energy generating facility or storage system to commence operation prior to the potential unreliable operation of the bulk-power system, taking into consideration factors such as if such prioritized facility or system—

“(A) has signed an engineering agreement;

“(B) has signed contracts for procurement or construction relating to such prioritized facility or system;

“(C) has access to any equipment necessary to be procured in advance;

“(D) has access to any fuel necessary for the operation of such prioritized facility or system;

“(E) has obtained any necessary permits for the construction or operation of such prioritized facility or system; and

"(F) would require extensive construction or modification to relevant electric transmission or distribution infrastructure.

"(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) BULK-POWER SYSTEM; RELIABLE OPERATION.—The terms 'bulk-power system' and 'reliable operation' have the meanings given those terms in section 215.

"(2) COVERED PROCEDURE.—

"(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term 'covered procedure' means a procedure to expedite the study and processing of generator interconnection requests for certain generating facilities or energy storage systems that—

"(i) previously submitted such a request; and

"(ii) but for such procedure, would otherwise be assigned a higher position in the generator interconnection queue.

"(B) The term 'covered procedure' shall not include any procedure to expedite requests for generator interconnection relating to requests for energy-resource interconnection service, connect-and-manage approaches, reassigning surplus interconnection service, or reassigning generator interconnection rights after the retirement of a generating facility or energy storage system.''.

Subtitle B—Tax and Grants

SEC. 411. TRANSMISSION INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart E of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after section 48E the following:

''SEC. 48F. QUALIFYING ELECTRIC POWER TRANSMISSION LINE CREDIT.

''(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—For purposes of section 46, the qualifying electric power transmission line credit for any taxable year is an amount equal to 6 percent of the qualified investment for such taxable year with respect to any qualifying electric power transmission line property of the taxpayer.

''(b) QUALIFIED INVESTMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (a), the qualified investment for any taxable year is the basis of any qualifying electric power transmission line property placed in service by the taxpayer during such taxable year.

"(2) CERTAIN QUALIFIED PROGRESS EXPENDITURES RULES MADE APPLICABLE.—Rules similar to the rules of subsections (c)(4) and (d) of section 46 (as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Revenue Reconciliation Act of 1990) shall apply for purposes of this section.

"(c) QUALIFYING ELECTRIC POWER TRANSMISSION LINE PROPERTY.—For purposes of this section, the term 'qualifying electric power transmission line property' means any overhead, submarine, or underground property—

"(1) which is a qualifying electric power transmission line that transmits electricity—

"(A) across no fewer than 2 States or not less than 150 continuous miles, or

"(B) across the Outer Continental Shelf (as defined in section 2 of the Outer Continental Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331)), or

"(2) which is related transmission property.

"(d) QUALIFYING ELECTRIC POWER TRANSMISSION LINE.—For purposes of this section—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualifying electric power transmission line' means any applicable new transmission property and any modified existing transmission property.

"(2) APPLICABLE NEW TRANSMISSION PROPERTY.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'applicable new transmission property' means any electric power transmission line which is—

"(i) originally placed in service after the date of the enactment of this section,

"(ii) primarily used for 1 or more purposes described in subparagraph (B), and

"(iii) described in subparagraph (C).

"(B) PURPOSES DESCRIBED.—The purposes described in this subparagraph are—

"(i) enhancing resilience to prepare for, withstand, and recover rapidly from disruptions from the impact of weather events, wildfires, or natural disasters,

"(ii) addressing clearance concerns,

"(iii) facilitating the interconnection of electric power generation capacity to the bulk-power system (as defined in section 215 of the Federal Power Act), or

"(iv) addressing high load needs of 2,000 ampere and above.

"(C) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW TRANSMISSION PROPERTY.—An electric power transmission line is described in this subparagraph if—

"(i) such transmission line—

"(I) includes an advanced transmission conductor, and

"(II) is capable of transmitting electricity at a voltage of not less than 100 kilovolts, or

"(ii) such transmission line—

"(I) is a superconducting transmission line or is capable of transmitting electricity at a voltage of at least 345 kilovolts, and

"(II) has a transmission capacity of not less than 750 megawatts or is a transmission line described in subparagraph (D).

"(D) MULTIPLE TRANSMISSION LINES LOCATED IN THE SAME RIGHT-OF-WAY.—A transmission line is described in this subparagraph if such a transmission line—

"(i) is co-located in the same right-of-way or adjacent right-of-way as 1 or more other overhead, submarine, or underground transmission lines, and "(ii) together with the other transmission lines described in subparagraph (A), has a transmission capacity of not less than 1,000 megawatts.

"(3) MODIFIED EXISTING TRANSMISSION PROPERTY.—The term 'modified existing transmission property' means any electric power transmission line which—

"(A) was placed in service before the date of the enactment of this section,

"(B) is modified after the date of enactment of this Act in a manner that—

"(i) increases the transmission capacity of such transmission line by not less than 500 megawatts, or

"(ii) includes an advanced transmission conductor that transmits electricity at a voltage of not less than 100 kilovolts, and

"(C) after the completion of such modification, is an electric power transmission line which satisfies the requirements under subclauses (ii) and (iii) of paragraph (2)(A).

"(4) ADVANCED TRANSMISSION CONDUCTOR.—The term 'advanced transmission conductor' means a transmission conductor technology that uses recently developed technology or materials such as a composite core and such other future advances as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy.

"(5) SUPERCONDUCTING TRANSMISSION LINE.—The term 'superconducting transmission line' means a transmission line that conducts all of its current over a super-conducting material.

"(e) RELATED TRANSMISSION PROPERTY.—For purposes of this section—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'related transmission property' means any of the following:

"(A) TRANSMISSION PROPERTY USED FOR INTERCONNECTION OR GENERATOR TIE-LINE.— Any electric power transmission line which is—

"(i) placed in service after the date of enactment of this section,

"(ii) primarily used—

"(I) as a generator interconnection tie line at an associated facility that extends from the secondary (high) side of a generator step-up transformer to the point of interconnection with the host transmission owner from interconnecting new generation resources or facilities to the electric grid, or

"(II) for network upgrades associated with the interconnection of new generation resources or facilities to the electric grid,

"(iii) primarily used for 1 or more purposes described in subsection (d)(2)(B), and

"(iv) capable of transmitting electricity at a voltage of not less than 230 kilovolts.

"(B) GRID ENHANCING TECHNOLOGY.—Any grid enhancing technology property used in the operation of the electric power transmission line described in paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (d).

"(C) SUBCOMPONENTS.—Any conductors or cables, towers, insulators, reactors, capacitors, circuit breakers, static VAR compensators, static synchronous compensators, power converters, transformers, synchronous condensers, braking resistors, and any ancillary facilities and equipment necessary for the proper operation of the electric power transmission line described in paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (d) or for the proper operation of any property described in subsection (d)(2).

"(2) GRID ENHANCING TECHNOLOGY PROPERTY.—The term 'grid enhancing technology property' means power flow controls and transmission switching equipment, storage technology, and hardware or software that enables dynamic line ratings, advanced line rating management technologies, on new or existing transmission property for the purpose of enhancing the capacity, efficiency, resiliency, or reliability of an electric power transmission system and such other similar property determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy.

"(f) INCREASED CREDIT AMOUNT FOR CERTAIN TRANSMISSION LINE PROPERTY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any qualifying electric power transmission line property which meets the requirements of paragraph (2), the amount of credit determined under subsection (a) (determined without regard to this subsection) shall be equal to such amount multiplied by 5.

"(2) FACILITY REQUIREMENTS.—Qualifying electric power transmission line property shall be treated as meeting the requirements of this paragraph if—

"(A) the construction of such property meets rules similar to the rules of section 48(a)(10) (relating to prevailing wage requirements) and section 45(b)(8) (relating to apprenticeship requirements), or

"(B) the construction of such property begins before the date that is 60 days after the Secretary publishes guidance with respect to the requirements under subparagraph (A).

"(g) TERMINATION.—This section shall not apply to any property the construction of which begins after December 31, 2035.".

(b) PUBLIC UTILITY PROPERTY.—Paragraph (2) of section 50(d) of the Internal Revenue Code is amended—

(1) by striking "(as defined in section 48(c)(6))" and inserting "(as defined in section 48(c)(6), except that subparagraph (D) of such section shall not apply) or any qualifying electric power transmission line property (as defined by section 48F(c))", and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by inserting "or qualifying electric power transmission line property" after "each energy storage technology", and

(B) by inserting "or the qualifying electric power transmission line property" after "the energy storage technology".

(c) TRANSFER OF CERTAIN CREDITS.—Section 6418(f)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(xiii) The qualifying electric power transmission line credit under section 48F.".

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 46 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) in paragraph (6), by striking "and" at the end,

(B) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at the end and inserting ", and", and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(8) the qualifying electric power transmission line credit.".

(2) Section 49(a)(1)(C) of such Code is amended—

(A) in clause (vii), by striking "and" at the end,

(B) in clause (viii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ", and", and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(ix) the basis of any qualifying electric power transmission line property under section 48F.".

(3) The table of sections for subpart E of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 48E the following new item:

"Sec. 48F. Qualifying electric power transmission line credit.".

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after December 31, 2025.

SEC. 412. REDUCED WILDFIRE RISKS TO THE GRID.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term "eligible entity" means—

(A) an electric grid operator;

(B) an electricity storage operator;

(C) an electricity generator;

(D) a transmission owner or operator;

(E) a distribution provider;

(F) a fuel supplier; and

(G) any other relevant entity, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) POWER LINE.—The term "power line" includes a transmission line or a distribution line, as applicable.

(3) PROGRAM.—The term "program" means the program established under subsection (b).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—Not later than days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall make grants to eligible entities, States, and Indian Tribes in accordance with this section.

(c) GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make a grant under the program to an eligible entity to carry out activities that—

(A) are supplemental to existing hardening efforts of the eligible entity planned for any given year; and

(B)(i) reduce the risk of any power lines owned or operated by the eligible entity causing a wildfire; or

(ii) increase the ability of the eligible entity to reduce the likelihood and consequences of wildfires.

(2) APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity desiring a grant under the program shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(B) REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of receiving a grant under the program, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary, as part of the application of the eligible entity submitted under subparagraph (A), a report detailing past, current, and future efforts by the eligible entity to reduce the likelihood and consequences of wildfires.

(3) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not award a grant to an eligible entity in an amount that is greater than the total amount that the eligible entity has spent in the previous 3 years on efforts to reduce the likelihood and consequences of wildfires.

(4) PRIORITY.—In making grants to eligible entities under the program, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that, in the determination of the Secretary, will generate the greatest community ben-

efit (whether rural or urban) in reducing the likelihood and consequences of wildfires.

(5) SMALL UTILITIES SET ASIDE.—The Secretary shall ensure that not less than 30 percent of the amounts made available to eligible entities under the program are made available to eligible entities that sell not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year.

(d) GRANTS TO STATES AND INDIAN TRIBES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in accordance with this subsection, may make grants under the program to States and Indian Tribes, which each State or Indian Tribe may use to award grants to eligible entities.

(2) ANNUAL APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—For each fiscal year, to be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, a State or Indian Tribe shall submit to the Secretary an application that includes a plan described in subparagraph (B).

(B) PLAN REQUIRED.—A plan prepared by a State or Indian Tribe for purposes of an application described in subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) describe the criteria and methods that will be used by the State or Indian Tribe to award grants to eligible entities;

(ii) be adopted after notice and a public hearing; and

(iii) describe the proposed funding distributions and recipients of the grants to be provided by the State or Indian Tribe.

(3) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide grants to States and Indian Tribes under this subsection based on a formula determined by the Secretary, in accordance with subparagraph (B).

(B) REQUIREMENT.—The formula referred to in subparagraph (A) shall be based on the following factors:

(i) The total population of the State or Indian Tribe.

(ii)(I) The total area of the State or the land of the Indian Tribe; or

(II) the areas in the State or on the land of the Indian Tribe with a low ratio of electricity customers per mileage of power lines.

(iii) The Wildfire Risk Index score and rating as calculated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(iv) The probability of wildfires in the State or on the land of the Indian Tribe during the previous 10 years, as determined based on the number of federally declared disasters or emergencies related to wildfires in the State or on the land of the Indian Tribe, as applicable, including—

(I) disasters for which Fire Management Assistance Grants are provided under section 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187);

(II) major disasters declared by the President under section 401 of that Act (42 U.S.C. 5170);

(III) emergencies declared by the President under section 501 of that Act (42 U.S.C. 5191); and

(IV) any other federally declared disaster or emergency in the State or on the land of the Indian Tribe.

(v) The number and severity, measured by population and economic impacts, of wildfires experienced by the State or Indian Tribe on or after January 1, 2015.

(vi) The total amount, on a per capita basis, of public and private expenditures during the previous 10 years to carry out mitigation efforts to reduce the likelihood and consequences of wildfires in the State or on the land of the Indian Tribe, with States or Indian Tribes with higher per capita expenditures receiving additional weight or consideration as compared to States or Indian Tribes with lower per capita expenditures.

(C) ANNUAL UPDATE OF DATA USED IN DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—Beginning 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall annually update—

(i) all data relating to the factors described in subparagraph (B); and

(ii) all other data used in distributing grants to States and Indian Tribes under this subsection.

(4) OVERSIGHT.—The Secretary shall ensure that each grant provided to a State or Indian Tribe under the program is allocated, pursuant to the applicable plan of the State or Indian Tribe, to eligible entities for projects within the State or on the land of the Indian Tribe.

(5) PRIORITY.—In making grants to eligible entities using funds made available to the applicable State or Indian Tribe under the program, the State or Indian Tribe shall give priority to projects that, in the determination of the State or Indian Tribe, will generate the greatest community benefit (whether rural or urban) in reducing the likelihood and consequences of wildfires.

(6) SMALL UTILITIES SET ASIDE.—A State or Indian Tribe receiving a grant under the program shall ensure that, of the amounts made available to eligible entities from funds made available to the State or Indian Tribe under the program, the percentage made available to eligible entities that sell not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year is not less than the percentage of all

customers in the State or Indian Tribe that are served by those eligible entities.

(7) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amounts made available to a State or Indian Tribe under the program each fiscal year, the State or Indian Tribe may use not more than 5 percent for—

(A) providing technical assistance under subsection (g)(1)(A); and

(B) administrative expenses associated with the program.

(8) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—Each State and Indian Tribe shall be required to match 15 percent of the amount of each grant provided to the State or Indian Tribe under the program.

(e) USE OF GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A grant awarded to an eligible entity under the program may be used for activities, technologies, equipment, and hardening measures to reduce the likelihood and consequences of wildfires, including—

(A) weatherization technologies and equipment;

(B) fire-resistant technologies and fire prevention systems;

(C) monitoring and control technologies, including digital tools;

(D) the undergrounding of electrical equipment;

(E) utility pole management;

(F) the relocation of power lines or the reconductoring of power lines with low-sag, advanced conductors;

(G) vegetation and fuel-load management;

(H) the use or construction of distributed energy resources for enhancing system adaptive capacity during wildfires, including—

(i) microgrids; and

(ii) battery-storage subcomponents;

(I) adaptive protection technologies;

(J) advanced modeling technologies;

(K) hardening of power lines, facilities, substations, of other systems;

(L) the replacement of old overhead conductors and underground cables; and

(M) the removal or replacement of old power lines.

(2) PROHIBITIONS AND LIMITATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A grant awarded to an eligible entity under the program may not be used for—

(i) construction of a new—

(I) electric generating facility; or

(II) large-scale battery-storage facility that is not used for enhancing system adaptive capacity during wildfires; or

(ii) cybersecurity.

(B) CERTAIN INVESTMENTS ELIGIBLE FOR RECOVERY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity may not seek cost recovery for the portion of the cost of any system, technology, or equipment that is funded through a grant awarded under the program.

(ii) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this subparagraph prohibits an eligible entity from recovering through traditional or incentive-based ratemaking any portion of an investment in a system, technology, or equipment that is not funded by a grant awarded under the program.

(C) APPLICATION LIMITATIONS.—An eligible entity may not submit an application for a grant provided by the Secretary under subsection (c) and a grant provided by a State or Indian Tribe pursuant to subsection (d) during the same application cycle.

(f) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDING.—Of the amounts made available to carry out the program for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall ensure that—

(1) 50 percent is used to award grants to eligible entities under subsection (c); and

(2) 50 percent is used to make grants to States and Indian Tribes under subsection (d).

(g) TECHNICAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, States, and Indian Tribes may—

(A) provide technical assistance and facilitate the distribution and sharing of information to reduce the likelihood and consequences of wildfires; and

(B) promulgate consumer-facing information and resources to inform the public of best practices and resources relating to reducing the likelihood and consequences of wildfires.

(2) USE OF FUNDS BY THE SECRETARY.—Of the amounts made available to the Secretary to carry out the program each fiscal year, the Secretary may use not more than 5 percent for—

(A) providing technical assistance under paragraph (1)(A); and

(B) administrative expenses associated with the program.

(h) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), an eligible entity that receives a grant under this section shall be required to match 100 percent of the amount of the grant.

(2) EXCEPTION FOR SMALL UTILITIES.—An eligible entity that sells not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year shall be required to match ⅓ of the amount of the grant.

(i) BIENNIAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter through, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report describing the program.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include information and data on—

(A) the costs of the projects for which grants are awarded to eligible entities;

(B) the types of activities, technologies, equipment, and hardening measures funded by those grants; and

(C) the extent to which the ability of the power grid to withstand and reduce the likelihood of wildfires has increased.

(j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out the program $3,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.

(k) CONTINUED ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall carry out the program, in addition to any activities authorized under Section 40103 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117–58).

(l) DAVIS-BACON.—All laborers and mechanics employed by contractors or subcontractors in the performance of construction, alteration, or repair work on a project assisted in whole or in part by funds made available under this section (or any amendment made by this section) shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on similar projects in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code (commonly referred to as the ‘‘Davis-Bacon Act’’), and the regulations issued thereunder at 29 CFR Part 5 (Davis-Bacon and Related Acts regulations). Compliance with these labor standards shall be a condition of receiving assistance under this section, and the Secretary concerned shall require that all contracts and subcontracts include the labor standards clauses prescribed by the Secretary of Labor.

Subtitle C—Transmission Governance Reform

SEC. 421. FERC STAFFING.

(a) ENSURING TIMELY REVIEW OF INFRASTRUCTURE.—Section 401(k) of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7171(k)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ‘‘subchapter III of’’;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking subparagraph (A); and

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (E) as subparagraphs (A) through (D), respectively; and

(3) in paragraph (6)—

(A) by striking ''The Chairman'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Chairman''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subparagraph, the Chairman shall submit to the Director of the Office of Personnel Management a plan to implement this subsection. The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall take final action on the plan not later than 120 days after the submission of such plan.''.

(b) DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY.—Section 401 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7171) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 3304 of title 5, United States Code, and without regard to the provisions of sections 3309 through 3318 of such title 5, if the Chairman of the Commission issues a certification that there is as severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for covered positions to carry out the Commission's responsibilities and activities, the Chairman may, subject to paragraph (3), recruit and directly appoint highly qualified individuals into the competitive service.

"(2) LIMITATION.—Any action authorized pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be consistent with the merit principles of section 2301 of title 5, United States Code, and the Commission shall comply with the public notice requirements of section 3327 of such title 5.

"(3) TERMINATION.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—A certification issued or renewed under this subsection shall terminate on the earlier of—

"(i) the date that is 5 years after the certification is issued or renewed; or

"(ii) the date on which the Chairman determines that there is no longer a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for covered positions to carry out the Commission's responsibilities and activities.

"(B) RENEWAL.—The Chairman may renew a certification issued or renewed under this subsection for an additional 5-year period if the Chairman determines there is still a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for covered positions to carry out the Commission's responsibilities and activities.

"(4) COVERED POSITION.—In this subsection, the term 'covered position' means a position in which an employee is responsible for conducting work of a scientific, technical, engineering, mathematical, legal, or otherwise highly specialized or skilled nature.".

(c) ELIMINATION OF REPORTING SUNSET.—Section 11004(b) of the Energy Act of 2020 (42 U.S.C. 7171 note; Public Law 116–260) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "thereafter for 10 years" and inserting "thereafter"; and

(2) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking "or mathematical" and inserting "mathematical, or otherwise highly specialized or skilled".

SEC. 422. FERC FEE ASSESSMENTS.

Section 3401 of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (42 U.S.C. 7178) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(h) REVIEW.—Not less often than once every 5 years, the Commission shall undertake a review to determine if the fees and charges it assesses under this section and other laws are sufficient to allow the Commission to handle its workload in an expedient manner.''.

SEC. 423. STATE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION CAPACITY GRANTS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 2 years following the enactment of this title, the Secretary of Energy shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall award grants to State regulatory authorities to increase the capacity of said authorities to evaluate filings made by utilities related to transmission and integrated resource plans, including through the hiring of economic modelers, engineers, and others with relevant expertise.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Energy such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 424. INDEPENDENT TRANSMISSION MONITORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Commission shall—

(1) require each transmission planning region to establish an independent entity to monitor the planning for, and operation of, transmission facilities in the transmission planning region; or

(2) establish an independent entity to monitor the planning for, and operation of, transmission facilities in all transmission planning regions.

(b) ROLE OF TRANSMISSION MONITOR.—An independent entity described in subsection (a) shall provide independent analysis of transmission planning and ratemaking processes by the Commission and Transmission Organizations to inform Commission proceedings, including by, as applicable—

(1) reviewing the operation and practices of transmission facilities in the applicable transmission planning region for inefficiency;

(2) investigating whether any rate, charge, or classification for transmission facilities in the applicable transmission planning region, or any rule, regulation, practice, or contract affecting such a rate, charge, or classification, is unjust, unreasonable, unduly discriminatory or preferential;

(3) reviewing the transmission planning process for the applicable transmission planning region, including processes for planning new and upgraded local transmission projects;

(4) reviewing transmission facility costs in the applicable transmission planning region;

(5) providing examples and advice to Transmission Organizations in the applicable transmission planning region on regional transmission operations, planning, and cost-allocation processes;

(6) identifying situations in which it is cost-effective or otherwise appropriate to construct or deploy advanced transmission technologies, demand-side energy efficiency measures, demand response, and distributed energy resources, including rooftop and community solar, microgrids, and storage;

(7) coordinating and sharing information with State regulatory authorities in the applicable transmission planning region; and

(8) identifying reliable data sets and methodologies for use in regional planning and providing access to data to stakeholders.

(c) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the sole power of the Commission to, under sections 205 and 206 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824d; 824e), determine if any rates, charges, or classifications are unjust, unreasonable, or unduly discriminatory or preferential.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(2) ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGY; STATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY; TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION; TRANSMISSION PLANNING REGION.—The terms "advanced transmission technology", "State regulatory authority", "Transmission Organization", and "transmission planning region" have the meanings given such terms in section 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

SEC. 425. AGGREGATOR BIDDING INTO ORGANIZED WHOLESALE ELECTRIC MARKETS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any prohibition established by a relevant electric retail regulatory authority with respect to who may bid into an organized wholesale electric market, each Transmission Organization shall, with respect to the organized wholesale electric market controlled by the Transmission Organization, allow any bid from an aggregator of retail customers that aggregates the demand flexibility of the customers of utilities that distributed more than 4 million megawatt-hours in the previous fiscal year. Such flexibility may be achieved through demand response, distributed generation, distributed storage, and community-based or municipal aggregation programs.

(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Commission shall promulgate a final rule pursuant to subsection (a).

(c) STANDARD PROCEDURES.—Each Transmission Organization shall establish standardized registration, telemetry, and settlement procedures for aggregators of distributed energy resources to ensure non-discriminatory participation and data access.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(2) ELECTRIC RETAIL REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—The term ''electric retail regulatory authority'' means an entity that establishes retail electricity prices and retail competition policies for customers.

(3) TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION.—The term ''Transmission Organization'' has the meaning given such term in section 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

SEC. 426. RTO AND ISO GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION.

(a) TECHNICAL CONFERENCE.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission shall convene a technical conference to consider Regional Transmission Organization and Independent System Operator independence from their members interests, the responsiveness of RTOs and ISOs to consumers and other stakeholders, and ways for RTOs and ISOs to increase the equitable treatment of consumers and other stakeholders, including the effectiveness of stakeholder policies and procedures adopted in compliance with the final rule entitled ''Wholesale Competition in Regions With Organized Electric Markets'' published in the Federal Register on October 28, 2008 (73 Fed. Reg. 64100).

(b) PARTICIPATION.—The technical conference convened under subsection (a) shall be led by members of the Commission, and the Commission shall invite participation from representatives of each RTO and ISO, owners and operators of transmission facilities, representatives of entities that develop advanced transmission technologies, owners and operators of electric generation facilities that interconnect at either the transmission or distribution system level, including energy storage, end-use customers, electric power marketers, publicly owned electric utilities, consumer advocates, environmental justice advocates, environmental groups, State public utility commissions, State governors, and such other stakeholders as the Commission determines appropriate.

(c) TOPICS.—In conducting the technical conference convened under subsection (a), the Commission shall seek to identify policies and procedures that maintain RTO and ISO independence, and enhance the responsiveness of RTOs and ISOs to their customers and other stakeholders, taking into consideration—

(1) the benefits of greater transparency in RTO and ISO stakeholder processes, including access by stakeholders to relevant data and written background materials;

(2) barriers to participation in such stakeholder processes for new market participants and other non-incumbent stakeholders;

(3) the need for periodic, independent review of RTO and ISO stakeholder policies and procedures;

(4) power imbalances between incumbent and non-incumbent stakeholders, including whether current RTO and ISO membership rules, sectoral designations, and voting procedures allow for adequate representation of all stakeholder views;

(5) how RTOs and ISOs should take State public policy objectives into consideration as part of such stakeholder processes;

(6) whether existing RTO and ISO decision-making processes are sufficiently independent from the control of any market participant or class of participants;

(7) the role of the Office of Public Participation of the Commission in facilitating greater stakeholder participation in RTOs and ISOs; and

(8) such other subjects as the Commission considers appropriate.

(d) PUBLIC COMMENT.—The Commission shall provide an opportunity for public comment on the technical conference convened under subsection (a).

(e) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 18 months after the conclusion of the technical conference convened under subsection (a), and after public notice and comment, the Commission shall promulgate a final rule adopting such policies and procedures as the Commission determines necessary to maintain the independence of RTOs and ISOs, and to enhance the transparency and responsiveness of RTOs and ISOs to their customers and other stakeholders.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(2) FEDERAL POWER ACT DEFINITIONS.—The terms ''electric utility'', ''Independent System Operator'', ''ISO'', ''Regional Transmission Organization'', ''RTO'', and ''State commission'' have the

meanings given such terms in section 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

SEC. 427. MODERNIZED GRID DATA AND ANALYTICS.

(a) MODERNIZATION OF REPORTING INFORMATION AND DATA UNDER THE FEDERAL POWER ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall, by rule, standardize the manner in which information and data is reported by transmitting utilities and Transmission Organizations to the Commission under the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 972 et seq.) in accordance with this subsection.

(2) CONTENT OF REPORTS REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Commission shall require the information and data that will be reported, as it applies to projects, existing assets, or systems owned or operated by a transmitting utility or Transmission Organization, to include the following:

(A) Information and data relating to a project and the lifecycle of such project, including—

(i) project milestones, including proposed, approved, and actual in-service dates;

(ii) project classification information, including whether the project represents new construction, an upgrade, or a rebuild of existing infrastructure;

(iii) major development history, including original construction and last major upgrade dates;

(iv) the location of any applicable project;

(v) the project nameplate capacity, length, voltage, and conductor material and specifications; and

(vi) an identification of the applicable planning process through which the applicable project originated.

(B) The costs and economic justifications of a project, existing asset, or system owned or operated by a transmitting utility or Transmission Organization, as applicable, including—

(i) original projected and actual final costs of all new projects;

(ii) original projected and actual final costs of renewals and replacements of project works;

(iii) original projected and actual maintenance and operations expenses of the projects and existing assets on a current-year and five-year rolling average basis;

(iv) cost allocation shares where applicable, including identification of entities responsible for shared investments in projects;

(v) cost-benefit analyses of projects;

(vi) whether the project was subject to a competitive solicitation process and, if applicable, the outcome of that process; and

(vii) classification of the project based on benefits provided, under the relevant transmission planning framework.

(C) The capital structure and the rate of return of a project, existing asset, or system owned or operated by a transmitting utility or Transmission Organization, including—

(i) the allowed return on equity (ROE), return on debt, and return on preferred stock;

(ii) the utility's authorized or actual capital structure, including the percentage of debt, equity, and preferred stock used in ratemaking;

(iii) the resulting overall weighted average rate of return;

(iv) any FERC-approved incentive adders applied to the base ROE, including rationale and duration; and

(v) where applicable, information necessary to assess potential double leveraging effects arising from a holding company structure, as defined by the Commission.

(D) For information and data relating to a system owned or operated by a transmitting utility or Transmission Organization, as applicable, congestion-related costs or the costs incurred by ratepayers, power supplies, or distribution customers as a result of transmission system constraints that prevent the dispatch of least-cost generation resources.

(E) Technical and non-technical losses and inefficiencies.

(F) A complete accounting of interconnection-related costs incurred by interconnection customers, transmitting utilities, or other entities, disaggregated by cost type and responsible party, including—

(i) study fees;

(ii) milestones or reservation payments;

(iii) costs of local interconnection attachment facilities;

(iv) grid network upgrade costs; and

(v) estimates of costs to a larger system.

(G) The projected and actual capacity and load of a system owned or operated by a transmitting utility or Transmission Organization and the projected and actual amount of energy delivered by such system.

(H) Information and data on the use of capital-efficient advanced technologies, including information on—

(i) hourly usage;

(ii) the location of the technologies; and

(iii) the types of technologies deployed.

(I) Any additional metrics the Commission determines necessary to improve ratepayer affordability and understanding of the transmission sector.

(3) CONTENT OF INTERCONNECTION REPORTS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Commission shall require a transmitting utility or Transmission Organization to report, no less than quarterly, to the Commission information and data on interconnection queues and details relating to interconnection study models used. Data reported under this paragraph shall include both historical and real time information to allow trend analysis and retrospective validation of study timelines.

(4) FORMAT OF REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to paragraph (1), the Commission shall ensure the completeness, accuracy, and accessibility of information and data reported to the Commission under the Federal Power Act, as the Commission determines necessary, by—

(i) establishing standardized reporting requirements that specify standards for describing and recording such information and data, and, if the Commission determines appropriate, providing templates or other tools to reduce administrative burden;

(ii) providing a format for such information and data to be submitted in a manner that is fully searchable and machine-readable;

(iii) requiring any form filed by a transmitting utility or a Transmission Organization contains no blank cells, unless clearly marked as exempt pursuant to subparagraph (B);

(iv) requiring any projections required under paragraph (1) are defined, including key assumptions, methodologies, and any other information that could influence the result of the projection; and

(v) requiring data reported under this subsection is also made available to the public through a single, user-friendly web interface that allows users to search, filter, and download the data in a machine-readable format.

(B) EXEMPTION.—A transmitting utility or a Transmission Organization may request an exemption from a requirement under subparagraph (A)(iii) if—

(i) such transmitting utility or Transmission Organization submits to the Commission a written statement explaining why such an exemption is needed; and

(ii) the Commission determines that the exemption is justified based on the written statement submitted under clause (i).

(5) FERC FORM NO 1.—

(A) REFILING.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Commission issues a rule under paragraph (1), with respect to a covered form, in the event the Commission determines that such covered form is incomplete, the Commission shall require the relevant transmitting utility or Transmission Organization to file a revised FERC Form No. 1 in a manner that complies with the requirements of paragraph (4) and the requirements under section 141.1 of title 18, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulations).

(B) COVERED FORM DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''covered form'' means a

FERC Form No. 1 filed with the Commission by a transmitting utility or Transmission Organization during the 5-year period immediately preceding the date of enactment of this Act.

(C) MODERNIZATION AND CENTRALIZATION OF FERC FORM NO. 1.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission, in collaboration with the Administrator, shall make all historical and future FERC Form No. 1 filings publicly available through the centralized data repository established under subsection (b).

(b) DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRALIZED DATA REPOSITORY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission, in collaboration with the Administrator, shall develop and maintain a searchable and publicly accessible data repository containing information and data the Commission determines necessary to carry out the requirements of this Act, including information and data reported or filed by a transmitting utility or Transmission Organization—

(A) in FERC Form Nos. 1, 1–F, 3–Q, 714, 715, and 730, including information or data from these forms reported prior to the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) pursuant to the requirements of this Act.

(2) EIA EXPERTISE.—In collaborating with the Commission under this subsection with respect to the data repository developed under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall—

(A) develop and maintain schemas and metadata for Form No. 1 data consistent with section 3506(b)(6) of title 44, United States Code;

(B) provide user-friendly tools to explore, download, and analyze such data, including filtering by utility, year, region, and data category; and

(C) ensure such data is accessible to the public in both bulk and disaggregated forms, with Application Programming Interfaces and visualization tools where feasible.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—The Commissioner shall ensure that the data repository developed and maintained under paragraph (1)—

(A) includes the data in fully searchable and machine-readable format;

(B) is capable of including high-quality data through schemas and accompanying metadata;

(C) ensures consistent identification of data elements or assets that satisfy regulatory requirements for data, established by the Commission, as reflected in machine-readable metadata;

(D) uses standardized data formats across all Transmission Organizations and transmitting utilities;

(E) is used by Transmission Organizations and transmitting utilities to file reports required under the Federal Power Act and this Act;

(F) enables uploading of reports filed under the Federal Power Act or this Act;

(G) is optimized for operability by Transmission Organizations and transmitting utilities to limit the administrative burden of, and ensure consistency in, such filings;

(H) includes interactive tools and visualization interfaces to allow users to explore trends in transmission buildout, interconnection timelines, and associated ratepayer costs;

(I) incorporates Application Programming Interfaces or bulk download functionality to support third-party analysis and research; and

(J) ensures that publicly accessible data is aligned with the security of guidelines for Critical Energy/Electric Infrastructure Information, and includes appropriate data anonymization and cybersecurity protections, based on Commission guidance.

(c) GRID RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS.—

(1) RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS.—The Secretary, in collaboration with the Commission, using standardized methodologies and anonymized queue data collected under this Act, shall conduct research and publish periodic reports on the following topics:

(A) Primary drivers of increased costs to ratepayers associated with transmission and interconnection, including—

(i) transmission capital expenditures;

(ii) interconnection-related upgrade costs;

(iii) interconnection study delays;

(iv) regional variations in cost allocation methodologies; and

(v) cost recovery practices by utilities and grid operators.

(B) Value delivered to ratepayers from transmission and interconnection investments, including through—

(i) improvements to electric system reliability;

(ii) avoided emissions or emissions reductions; and

(iii) enhancements to long-term system resilience and grid flexibility.

(C) Mechanisms to enhance ratepayer affordability, including—

(i) evaluation of performance-based regulation frameworks applied to transmission and interconnection-related investments;

(ii) assessment of alternative interconnection solutions such as advanced transmission technologies, shared infrastructure models, or consolidated upgrades; and

(iii) evaluation of demand-side interventions that reduce the need for costly transmission or interconnection investments.

(D) Comparative scenario modeling of potential energy futures, to—

(i) identify lowest-cost pathways to national grid expansion;

(ii) assess trade-offs among investment strategies; and

(iii) inform decision-making by utilities, regional planning entities, and Federal agencies.

(E) Systemic cost impacts from interconnection inefficiencies, including analysis of how study delays, queue withdrawals, and increased construction periods contribute to higher system costs for ratepayers or generators.

(F) Opportunities to increase system efficiency and unlock latent capacity through improved operational practices and deployment of advanced technologies, including—

(i) assessment of unused or underutilized grid capacity due to outdated planning assumptions or lack of dynamic optimization;

(ii) evaluation of technologies such as dynamic line ratings, topology optimization, flexible interconnection, or flow control devices; and

(iii) quantification of benefits to ratepayers and system operators from unlocking this capacity relative to traditional capital-intensive buildout.

(2) INTERCONNECTION TRANSPARENCY AND DASHBOARD.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, through 1 or more National Laboratories, develop, maintain, and continuously improve an Interconnection Data Dashboard that presents real-time and historical information relevant to interconnection of generators, loads, and other utilities or transmission systems.

(B) PURPOSE.—The Dashboard shall provide public stakeholders, regulators, utilities, developers, and researchers with transparent, up-to-date insights into the effectiveness, efficiency, affordability, and reliability of interconnection processes across all transmission planning regions.

(C) DATA SOURCES.—The Dashboard shall incorporate data collected under subsection (b) of this Act and from FERC Form No. 1 filings, relevant Commission filings, publicly available interconnection queue data, and additional datasets, as determined appropriate by the Secretary or the Commission.

(D) CAPABILITIES.—The Secretary shall develop the Dashboard to be able to—

(i) present anonymized interconnection queue data, including application volumes, withdrawal rates, project timelines, and milestones;

(ii) provide visualization of average and median interconnection study durations, disaggregated by region and project type;

(iii) show aggregated system upgrade costs, study backlogs, and queue performance metrics;

(iv) allow filtering by geographic location (e.g., State, balancing authority, latitude/longitude coordinate), utility, fuel type, and project size;

(v) present each interconnection project's current development status, such as application submitted, study phase, approved, under construction, or in-service;

(vi) display physical asset characteristics for each interconnection project and system segment, including nameplate generation capacity, peak load served, and conductor capacity ratings;

(vii) identify trends in queue reform outcomes, including impacts on throughput, delay reduction, and project completion rates;

(viii) support export of underlying data in machine-readable formats for public analysis; and

(ix) perform any other function the Secretary determines appropriate.

(E) REPORTING.—The Secretary, in collaboration with National Laboratories and the Commission, shall publish annual reports summarizing findings from the Dashboard, based on data collected pursuant to subsection (b), without substituting for the more comprehensive cost-driver analysis required under paragraph (1), including—

(i) interregional comparisons of queue efficiency and project success rates;

(ii) systemic drivers of delay or cost escalation;

(iii) estimated ratepayer impacts associated with interconnection bottlenecks; and

(iv) recommendations for improving interconnection transparency and system performance.

(F) PUBLIC ACCESS.—The Dashboard shall be made available on a public website and designed for use by a broad range of users, including through visualizations, downloadable datasets, and API access, while maintaining protections for CEII.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘‘Administrator’’ means the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration of the Department of Energy.

(2) COMMISSION.—The term ‘‘Commission’’ means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(3) FERC FORM NO. 1.—The term ''FERC Form No. 1'' means the Form of Annual Report for Major electric utilities, licensees, and others, designated as FERC Form No. 1 and prescribed under section 141.1 of title 18, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

(4) METADATA.—The term ''metadata'' has the meaning given such term in section 3502 of title 44, United States Code.

(5) PROJECT.—The term ''project'' refers exclusively to transmission infrastructure projects planned, proposed, or undertaken by the transmitting utility. This includes projects initiated through—

(A) regional or local transmission planning processes;

(B) interconnection studies;

(C) reliability-driven upgrades; and

(D) other applicable pathways as determined by the Commission.

(6) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

(7) TRANSMITTING UTILITY; TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION.—The terms ''transmitting utility'', and

"Transmission Organization" have the meanings given those terms in section 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

TITLE V—DEPLOYING LOW-COST, CLEAN ENERGY RESPONSIBLY ON PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS

Subtitle A—Public Land Renewable Energy Development

SEC. 501. PUBLIC LAND RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) COVERED LAND.—The term "covered land" means land that is—

(A) Federal land;

(B) not excluded from the development of geothermal, solar, or wind energy under—

(i) a land use plan; or

(ii) other Federal law; and

(C) not included in an area—

(i) that is subject to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan developed by the California Energy Commission, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; or

(ii) for which the Secretary determines existing wind and solar energy land use planning meets or exceeds the standards established under section 3.

(2) ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT.—The term ''energy storage project'' means equipment that—

(A) receives, stores, and delivers energy-using batteries, compressed air, pumped hydropower, hydrogen storage (including hydrolysis), thermal energy storage, regenerative fuel cells, flywheels, capacitors, superconducting magnets, or other technologies identified by the Secretary of Energy; and

(B) has a storage capacity of not less than 5 kilowatt hours.

(3) EXCLUSION AREA.—The term ''exclusion area'' means covered land that is identified by the Bureau of Land Management as not suitable for development of renewable energy projects.

(4) FEDERAL LAND.—The term ''Federal land'' means—

(A) public land; and

(B) National Forest System lands administered by the Department of Agriculture through the Forest Service where the Secretary has authority to issue leases for the development and utilization of geothermal resources under section 3 and section 15 of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1002, 1014).

(5) FUND.—The term ''Fund'' means the Renewable Energy Resource Conservation Fund established by section 6(c)(1).

(6) LAND USE PLAN.—The term ''land use plan'' means—

(A) with respect to public land, a land use plan established under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

(B) with respect to National Forest System land, a land management plan approved, amended, or revised under section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604).

(7) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term ''National Forest System'' has the meaning given the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Range-

land Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

(8) PRIORITY AREA.—The term ''priority area'' means covered land identified by the land use planning process of the Bureau of Land Management as being a preferred location for a renewable energy project, including an area that is identified as a designated leasing area under the rule of the Bureau of Land Management entitled ''Competitive Processes, Terms, and Conditions for Leasing Public Lands for Solar and Wind Energy Development and Technical Changes and Corrections'' (81 Fed. Reg. 92122 (December 19, 2016)) (or a successor regulation).

(9) PUBLIC LAND.—The term ''public land'' has the meaning given the term ''public lands'' in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702).

(10) RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT.—The term ''renewable energy project''—

(A) means a project carried out on covered land that—

(i) uses wind, solar, or geothermal energy to generate energy; or

(ii) transmits electricity to support wind, solar, or geothermal energy generation; and

(B) may include an associated energy storage project.

(11) SECRETARY.—The term ‘‘Secretary’’ means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) UPDATING NATIONAL GOALS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PRODUCTION ON FEDERAL LAND.—Section 3104 of the Energy Act of 2020 (43 U.S.C. 3004) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking ‘‘seek to’’;

(B) by striking ‘‘25’’ and inserting ‘‘60’’; and

(C) by striking ‘‘2025’’ and inserting ‘‘December 31, 2035’’; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

‘‘(c) UPDATE.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall update the national goals for renewable energy production on Federal land established under subsection (a).’’.

(c) LAND USE PLANNING AND UPDATES TO PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS.—

(1) PRIORITY AREAS.—

(A) ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITY AREAS; DESIGNATION OF AREAS ELIGIBLE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT APPLICATIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of renewable energy planning, the Secretary, consistent with the requirements described in clause (ii), shall—

(I) update completed land use plans that, with respect to covered lands, have designated areas as eligible for the submission of renewable energy project applications; and

(II) establish priority areas on covered land for renewable energy projects.

(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out activities under clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall—

(I) after an opportunity for public comment, review the adequacy of public lands for renewable energy projects for the purposes of—

(aa) encouraging and facilitating new renewable energy projects; and

(bb) ensuring consistency with a mitigation sequence of avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for adverse impacts to other public uses and values of covered land, including—

(AA) wildlife habitat;

(BB) species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

(CC) water resources;

(DD) cultural resources;

(EE) recreational uses;

(FF) land with wilderness characteristics;

(GG) land with special management designations; and

(HH) areas of Tribal importance; and

(II) comply with—

(aa) the principles of multiple use (as defined in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702)); and

(bb) the national goals for renewable energy production established under section 3104 of the Energy Act of 2020 (43 U.S.C. 3004), including the minimum production goal described in subsection (b) of that section.

(B) PRIORITY FOR CERTAIN APPLICATIONS.—In considering applications for renewable energy projects on covered land, with respect to an application for a proposed renewable energy project on covered land that is to be carried out in a priority area, the Secretary shall—

(i) prioritize the application to be carried out in any identified priority area; and

(ii) on approval of the application, provide to the applicant who submitted the application the opportunity to participate in any regional mitigation plan developed for the applicable priority area.

(C) PROGRAMMATIC PLANNING.—

(i) SOLAR ENERGY.—As soon as practicable, but not later than 18 months after the Record of Decision entitled "Approved Record of Decision and Amendments/Record of Decision for Utility-Scale Solar Energy Development" dated December 2024 was issued, the Secretary shall consider establishing priority areas on covered land for Solar energy projects in the planning area (as defined in the Record of Decision).

(ii) WIND ENERGY.—As soon as practicable, but not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall initiate a review of the final programmatic Environment Impact Statement referenced in the notice of availability entitled "Notice of Availability of the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Wind Energy Development on BLM-Administered Lands in the Western United States, Including Proposed Amendments to Selected Land Use Plans" (70 Fed. Reg. 36651 (June 24, 2005)), that considers establishment of wind application and priority areas on covered lands, and complete that review within 3 years of issuing a notice of intent.

(iii) GEOTHERMAL ENERGY.—As soon as practicable, the Secretary shall initiate and complete a review or update of existing programmatic analyses for geothermal energy development on covered lands, identifying areas suitable for leasing and development, and aligning such analyses with current land use plans and transmission planning efforts.

(iv) ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION.—As soon as practicable, the Secretary shall initiate and complete a programmatic analysis for electric transmission development on covered lands, identifying priority and corridor areas that support renewable energy buildout and grid reliability, and coordinating with regional transmission planning processes and existing right-of-way designations.

(2) REVIEW AND MODIFICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), not less frequently than once every 10 years, the Secretary shall—

(i) after an opportunity for public comment, review the adequacy of all land allocations for renewable energy projects under the requirements in clause (ii) of subparagraph (A); and

(ii) based on the review carried out under subparagraph (A), add, modify, or eliminate priority areas, exclusion areas, and areas on covered land open or closed to solar or wind energy right-of-way applications or to geothermal leasing.

(B) LIMITATION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to any covered land that the Secretary determines, after seeking public input, is subject to an existing land use plan that meets the purposes described in paragraph (1)(A).

(C) REPORT.—If the Secretary determines, in an annual report required under subsection (g) of section 3102 of the Energy Act of 2020 (43 U.S.C. 3002) (as redesignated by subsection (d)(1)(A)), that the national goal for renewable energy production established under subsection (a) of section 3104 of that Act (43 U.S.C. 3004), including the minimum production goal established under subsection (b) of that section, may not be met, the Secretary shall act more frequently than otherwise required by this subsection to designate areas eligible for the submission of renewable energy project applications and establish additional priority areas for renewable energy projects.

(3) COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT OF 1969.—For purposes of this section, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall be accomplished—

(A) for geothermal energy—

(i) by updating the document entitled "Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States'' and dated October 2008; and

(ii) by incorporating into the updated document under clause (i) any additional regional analyses completed by Federal agencies after the date on which the document described in that subparagraph was finalized;

(B) for solar energy—

(i) by updating the document entitled ''Approved Record of Decision and Amendments/Record of Decision for Utility-Scale Solar Energy Development'' and dated December 2024, 10 years after the publication of the document; and

(ii) by incorporating into the updated document under clause (i) any additional regional analyses completed by Federal agencies after the date on which the document described in that subparagraph was finalized; and

(C) for wind energy—

(i) by updating the document entitled ''Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Wind Energy Development on BLM-Administered Lands in the Western United States'' and dated June 2005; and

(ii) by incorporating into the updated document under clause (i) any additional regional analyses completed by Federal agencies after the date on which the document described in that subparagraph was finalized.

(4) NO EFFECT ON PROCESSING SITE-SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS.—Nothing in this section modifies any requirement to conduct site-specific environmental reviews or process permits for proposed renewable energy projects during preparation of an updated programmatic environmental impact statement, land use plan, or amendment to a land use plan.

(5) COORDINATION.—In developing any update required under this section, the Secretary shall coordinate, on an ongoing basis, with appropriate State, Tribal, and local governments, transmission infrastructure owners, operators, and developers, renewable energy developers, and other appropriate entities to ensure that priority areas established by the Secretary under this section take into account—

(A) economic viability (including having access to existing or planned transmission lines);

(B) consistency with a mitigation sequence to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts to—

(i) fish, wildlife, or plants;

(ii) fish, wildlife, or plant habitat;

(iii) recreational uses;

(iv) land with wilderness characteristics;

(v) land with special management designations;

(vi) cultural resources;

(vii) areas of Tribal importance; and

(viii) other uses of covered land;

(C) feasibility of siting on previously disturbed land, including commercial and industrial land, mine land, and previously contaminated sites; and

(D) consistency with section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712), including subsection (c)(9) of that section (43 U.S.C. 1712(c)(9)).

(6) TRANSMISSION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall—

(A) determine whether adequate transmission exists for renewable energy projects on covered land; and

(B) if a determination is made in the negative under subparagraph (A), in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, review existing land use plans to determine if amendments to those land use plans would be appropriate to support adequate transmission capability.

(d) IMPROVING WIND AND SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT PERMITTING.—

(1) ROLE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY COORDINATION OFFICES.—Section 3102 of the Energy Act of 2020 (43 U.S.C. 3002) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

"(e) PROCESSING OF WIND AND SOLAR ENERGY APPLICATIONS.—

"(1) DELEGATION TO STATE RENEWABLE ENERGY COORDINATION OFFICES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may delegate to a State Renewable Energy Coordination Office the authority to process applications for eligible projects proposed to be carried out on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management in the applicable State.

"(B) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGERS.—For purposes of processing applications described in subparagraph (A), the manager of the applicable State Renewable Energy Coordination Office—

"(i) shall have the authority to issue grants or leases for eligible projects;

"(ii) with the approval of the State Director of the applicable Bureau of Land Management State Office, may use other employees in field and district offices of the applicable Bureau of Land Management State Office, or hire additional experts, to assist with timely processing of applications, with the costs of hiring additional experts to be charged to applicants; and

"(iii) shall report to the State Director of the applicable Bureau of Land Management State Office.

"(2) PROHIBITION OF DELEGATION TO EMPLOYEES OF FIELD OR DISTRICT OFFICES.—Except as provided in paragraph (1)(B)(ii), the Secretary may not delegate to employees of field or district offices of the Bureau of Land Management the authority to process applications for eligible projects proposed to be carried out on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management.".

(2) COST RECOVERY AGREEMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which an applicant submits a complete application for a right-of-way for a wind or solar energy project, including submission of the filing fee required under section 2804.12 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), the Secretary shall provide a cost recovery agreement with respect to the application.

(B) EFFECT.—Issuance of a cost recovery agreement under subparagraph (A) and payment of cost recovery fees shall preclude any new claims to the use of the applicable covered land during any period in which the application is active.

(C) CONFLICTS; STUDIES.—

(i) CONFLICTS.—To be considered complete under subparagraph (A), an application described in that paragraph shall address any known conflicts with respect to the use of the applicable covered land, as identified in scientific literature or other studies.

(ii) ADDITIONAL STUDIES.—Additional studies shall not be required for purposes of considering an application to be complete under subparagraph (A).

(3) ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) NOTICE OF INTENT.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the agency notifies the applicant that the application to establish a right-of-way is complete, or a later date to be established by the Secretary under clause (ii), if an environmental impact statement is determined to be necessary, the Secretary shall issue a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement with respect to the application.

(ii) EXTENSION.—The Secretary shall establish a later date by which the notice under clause (i) shall be issued, if the Secretary determines that the 180-day period under that paragraph should be extended due to—

(I) the application being considered a low priority under section 2804.35 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation);

(II) project-specific circumstances, including the need for further studies, making the 180-day deadline insufficient; or

(III) the application not meeting the requirements for approval.

(B) CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION.—

(i) PRELIMINARY WORK.—As the Secretary determines to be appropriate, the Secretary may promulgate regulations providing that preliminary geotechnical work and meteorological monitoring relating to renewable energy projects shall be categorically excluded from the requirements for an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement under section 1501.4 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

(ii) DEADLINE.—For any energy projects eligible for a categorical exclusion under paragraph 1, the Secretary shall issue a decision within 90 days of the submission of a complete application.

(4) PROCESSING PRIORITY.—In processing applications described in paragraph (2)(A), the Secretary shall—

(A) give priority to applications for renewable energy projects in priority areas; and

(B) process applications for renewable energy projects in areas that are not priority areas in the order in which the applications are received.

(5) USE OF COMPETITIVE PROCESS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall not use a competitive process for the review of an application described in paragraph (2)(A), except—

(i) in a case in which 2 or more applicants file an application for the same site (or portions of the same site) not more than 15 days apart; or

(ii) as otherwise established by the Secretary through a subsequent rulemaking process delineating the instances in which the Secretary will use the competitive process.

(B) LIMITATION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to applications for competitive right-of-way leases in priority areas.

(e) INCREASING ECONOMIC CERTAINTY.—

(1) RENTS AND FEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In determining rental rates and other fees for renewable energy project leases or right-of-way grants, the Secretary shall ensure that the total rental rates and other fees charged do not exceed the average amount charged for similar activities on private land in the State or county in which the rental rates and other fees are charged.

(B) INDIVIDUAL APPRAISALS NOT REQUIRED.—For purposes of determining rental rates for renewable energy projects, the Secretary—

(i) shall not be required to conduct individual appraisals; and

(ii) may use average cash rents included in the Pastureland Rents Survey prepared by the National Agricultural Statistics Service, as determined for the 5-year period ending on the date on which the rental rate is determined.

(C) INCREASES IN BASE RENTAL RATES.—After a base rental rate is established for a lease or right-of-way grant authorization for a renewable energy project, any increase in the base rental rate shall be limited to the Implicit Price Deflator-Gross Product Index published by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the Department of Commerce on the date of issuance of the lease or right-of way grant authorization.

(D) CAPACITY FEES.—The Secretary may consider charging a capacity fee for a renewable energy project only if the Secretary determines that capacity fees are charged within the region or State in which the renewable energy project is carried out, as part of leaseholds on State or private land.

(2) BONDS.—The Secretary shall adopt a process for establishing bond requirements for decommissioning renewable energy projects that—

(A) do not establish a minimum per acre amount; and

(B) are based on the difference between—

(i) the estimated, site-specific net costs of reclamation of the covered land; and

(ii) the salvage value of materials available after decommissioning the renewable energy project.

(f) DISPOSITION OF REVENUES; RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCE CONSERVATION FUND.—

(1) DISPOSITION OF REVENUES.—

(A) AVAILABILITY.—Except as provided in subparagraph (C), without further appropriation or fiscal year limitation, of amounts collected from wind and solar energy projects as bonus bids, rentals, fees, or other payments under a right-of-way, permit, lease, or other authorization—

(i) for the period beginning on January 1, 2027, and ending on December 31, 2046—

(I) 25 percent shall be paid by the Secretary of the Treasury to the State within the boundaries of which the revenue is derived;

(II) 25 percent shall be paid by the Secretary of the Treasury to the 1 or more counties within the boundaries of which the revenue is derived, to be allocated among the counties based on the percentage of land from which the revenue is derived;

(III) 15 percent shall be deposited in the Treasury and credited to the Bureau of Land Management's Renewable Energy Management account to be made available to the Secretary to carry out sections 3 and 4 (including amendments made by those sections), including the transfer of the funds by the Bureau of Land Management to other Federal agencies and State agencies to facilitate the processing of permits for renewable energy projects, with priority given to using the amounts, to the maximum extent practicable, without detrimental impacts to emerging markets, expediting the issuance of permits required for the development of wind and solar energy projects in the States from which the revenues are derived; and

(IV) 35 percent shall be deposited in the Fund; and

(ii) beginning on January 1, 2047—

(I) 25 percent shall be paid by the Secretary of the Treasury to the State within the boundaries of which the revenue is derived;

(II) 25 percent shall be paid by the Secretary of the Treasury to the 1 or more counties within the boundaries of which the revenue is derived, to be allocated among the counties based on the percentage of land from which the revenue is derived;

(III) 10 percent shall be deposited in the Treasury and be made available to the Secretary to carry out sections 3 and 4 (including amendments made by those sections), including the transfer of the funds by the Bureau of Land Management to other Federal agencies and State agencies to facilitate the processing of permits for wind and solar energy projects, with priority given to using the amounts, to the maximum extent practicable, without detrimental impacts to emerging markets, expediting the issuance of permits required for the development of renewable energy projects in the States from which the revenues are derived; and

(IV) 40 percent shall be deposited in the Fund.

(B) RULE FOR PROJECTS LOCATED IN MULTIPLE STATES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue a proposed rule establishing a formula for the disposition of revenues under clauses (i)(I) and (ii)(I) of subparagraph (A) in a case in which a wind and solar energy project is located in more than 1 State.

(C) FILING FEES.—With respect to wind and solar energy projects—

(i) subparagraph (A) does not apply to amounts collected from application filing fees authorized under section 304 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1734); and

(ii) such application filing fees may be retained by the applicable agency to recover costs associated with issuing the right-of-way, permit, or other authorization associated with the application.

(2) PAYMENTS TO STATES AND COUNTIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Amounts paid to States and Counties under paragraph (1)(A) shall be used consistent with section 35 of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 191).

(B) PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES.—A payment to a County under clause (i)(II) or (ii)(II) of paragraph (1)(A) shall be in addition to a payment in lieu of taxes received by the County under chapter 69 of title 31, United States Code.

(3) RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCE CONSERVATION FUND.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the Treasury a fund, to be known as the ''Renewable Energy Resource Conservation Fund'', which shall be administered by the Secretary.

(B) USE OF FUNDS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make amounts in the Fund available to Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies for distribution in regions in which renewable energy projects are located on Federal land, for the purposes described in clause (ii).

(ii) PURPOSES.—The purposes referred to in clause (i) are—

(I) restoring and protecting—

(aa) fish and wildlife habitat for species affected by renewable energy projects;

(bb) fish and wildlife corridors for species affected by renewable energy projects; and

(cc) wetlands, streams, rivers, and other natural water bodies in areas affected by renewable energy projects; and

(II) preserving and improving recreational access to Federal land and water in the applicable region through an easement, right-of-way, or other instrument from willing landowners for the purpose of enhancing public access to existing Federal land and water that is inaccessible or restricted due to renewable energy projects.

(C) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with State and Tribal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other appropriate entities to carry out the activities described in subparagraph (B).

(D) INVESTMENT OF FUND.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Any amounts deposited in the Fund shall earn interest in an amount determined by the Secretary of the Treasury on the basis of the current average market yield on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States of comparable maturities.

(ii) USE.—Any interest earned under clause (i) may be deposited into the Fund and used without further appropriation.

(E) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—At the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report identifying—

(i) the amounts described in paragraph (1) that were collected during that fiscal year, organized by source;

(ii) the amount and purpose of payments made to each Federal, State, local, and Tribal agency under subparagraph (B) during that fiscal year; and

(iii) the amount remaining in the Fund at the end of the fiscal year.

(F) INTENT OF CONGRESS.—It is the intent of Congress that the revenues deposited and expended from the Fund shall supplement (and not supplant) annual appropriations for activities described in subparagraph (B).

(g) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall include in its annual budget requests staffing, contracting and technological resources necessary to meet the permitting timelines required in this Act and in 42 U.S.C. 4336a.

(h) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Secretary and the Secretary of Agriculture shall continue to manage public land under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield in accordance with title I of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) or the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.), as applicable, for the purposes of land use planning, permit processing, and conducting environmental reviews.

SEC. 502. GEOTHERMAL COST RECOVERY.

(a) COST RECOVERY FROM GEOTHERMAL LEASING, PERMITTING, AND INSPECTIONS.—Section 6 of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1005) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(j) COST RECOVERY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—During the period that begins on the date of enactment of this subsection and ends September 30, 2033, the Secretary may require an applicant for, or a holder of, a geothermal lease to reimburse the United States for all reasonable administrative and other costs incurred by the United States from—

"(A) processing the application for the geothermal lease, including any application for an operations plan, geothermal drilling permit, utilization plan, site license, facility construction permit, commercial use permit, and any other approval associated with a geothermal lease; and

"(B) inspecting and monitoring—

"(i) geophysical exploration activities;

"(ii) the drilling, plugging, and abandonment of wells; and

"(iii) the construction, operation, termination, and reclamation of any well site or facility for the utilization of geothermal resources pursuant to the geothermal lease.

"(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining whether to require reimbursement under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider whether there is in existence a cooperative cost share agreement between the United States and the holder of a geothermal lease.

"(3) ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary may reduce the amount to be reimbursed under paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines—

"(A) that full reimbursement would impose an economic hardship on the applicant; or

"(B) that a less than full reimbursement is necessary to promote the greatest use of geothermal resources.

"(4) USE.—The amounts reimbursed under this subsection shall be credited to the currently applicable appropriation, account, or fund of the Department of the Interior as discretionary offsetting collections, and shall be available only to the extent provided in advance in appropriations Acts for—

"(A) processing the application for geothermal leases, including any application for operations plans, geothermal drilling permits, utilization plans, site licenses, facility construction permits, commercial use permits, and any other approval associated with geothermal leases; and

"(B) inspecting and monitoring—

"(i) geophysical exploration activities;

"(ii) the drilling, plugging, and abandonment of wells; and "(iii) the construction, operation, termination, and reclamation of any well site or facility for the utilization of geothermal resources pursuant to geothermal leases.".

(b) REPORT.—

(1) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the geothermal industry and other stakeholders, shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, and make publicly available on the website of the Department of the Interior, a report that includes—

(A) an assessment of how the amendments made by subsection (b) of this Act affected the Bureau of Land Management's geothermal program;

(B) any recommendations for reauthorization of section 6(j) of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970, as added by this Act; and

(C) any other recommendations for updates to such section and the Bureau of Land Management's geothermal program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the report required in paragraph (1), the Secretary of the Interior shall solicit facts or information from the geothermal industry and other stakeholders.

SEC. 503. GEOTHERMAL GOLD BOOK DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IDENTIFICATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Department of the Interior, in consultation with other relevant Federal agencies, shall identify standard procedures and guidelines for efficient and environmentally responsible geothermal leasing and permitting.

(b) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 180 days after identifying standard procedures and guidelines under subsection (a), the Department of the Interior shall publish a ‘‘Gold Book’’ containing such standard procedures and guidelines for use by the field offices of the Bureau of Land Management and geothermal operators.

(c) CONSULTATION.—Before publishing the Gold Book, the Department of the Interior shall consult with—

(1) other relevant Federal agencies, including field offices of the Bureau of Land Management; and

(2) outside stakeholders, including developers and other experts.

(d) INCLUSIONS.—The Gold Book shall include standard procedures and guidelines for—

(1) land use planning and geothermal lease sales; and

(2) ensuring the efficient review and approval of environmentally responsible geothermal development, including—

(A) exploration and geophysical operations;

(B) permitting lease operations;

(C) compliance with all applicable laws and regulations;

(D) construction and maintenance;

(E) drilling and production operations;

(F) appeals; and

(G) relevant categorical exclusions available at each stage.

(e) PERIODIC REVISION.—The Department of the Interior shall—

(1) at least once every five years, review the Gold Book; and

(2) as necessary, revise the Gold Book.

Subtitle B—Offshore Renewable Deployment

SEC. 511. RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331) is amended—

(1) in the second subsection (r), as added by section 50251(b)(1)(A)(iv) of Public Law 117–169—

(A) by redesignating such subsection (r) as subsection (t); and

(B) by inserting after the enumerator "STATE.—"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(u) OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT.—The term 'offshore renewable energy project' means a project to carry out an activity described in section 8(p)(1)(C) related to wind, solar, wave, or tidal energy.".

(b) NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF.—Section 3 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1332) is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

"(3) the outer Continental Shelf is a vital national resource reserve held by the Federal Government for the public, which can be made available for orderly development, subject to environmental safeguards and coexistence with other ocean users, in a manner which includes—

"(A) supporting the generation, transmission, and storage of zero-emission electricity; and

"(B) the maintenance of competition and other national needs, including the need to achieve State and Federal zero-emission electricity or renewable energy mandates, targets, and goals;";

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (5) and (6) as paragraphs (6) and (7), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

"(5) the identification and development of lease areas for offshore renewable energy projects should be determined by a robust and transparent stakeholder process that incorporates engagement and input from a diverse group of ocean users and other impacted stakeholders, and Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments;".

(c) LEASES, EASEMENTS, AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY ON THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF.—Section 8(p) of the

Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1337(p)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking ‘‘27’’ and inserting ‘‘17’’;

(ii) by striking ‘‘three’’ and inserting ‘‘100’’; and

(iii) by striking ‘‘15’’ and inserting ‘‘100’’; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

‘‘(C) PAYMENTS FOR CONSERVATION AND MITIGATION ACTIVITIES.—

‘‘(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 9, the Secretary shall, without appropriation or fiscal year limitation, use 10 percent of the revenue received by the Federal Government from royalties, fees, rents, bonuses, and other payments from any lease, easement, or right-of-way granted under this subsection to provide grants to—

‘‘(I) State, local, and Tribal governments, and regional partnerships thereof, including Regional Ocean Partnerships, Regional Wildlife Science Collaboratives, and other similar organizations; and

“(II) nonprofit organizations.

“(ii) USE OF GRANTS.—Grants provided under clause (i) shall be used for carrying out activities related to marine and coastal habitat protection and restoration, mitigation of damage to natural resources and marine life that results from activities authorized by this subsection, relevant research and data sharing initiatives, or increasing the organizational capacity of an entity described in subclause (I) or (II) of clause (i) to increase the effectiveness of entities that carry out such activities.

“(D) OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY COMPENSATION FUND.—Notwithstanding section 9, the Secretary shall, without appropriation or fiscal year limitation, deposit 10 percent of the revenue received by the Federal Government from royalties, fees, rents, bonuses, and other payments from any lease, easement, or right-of-way granted under this subsection into the Offshore Renewable Energy Compensation Fund established under section 34.”;

(2) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

"(3) LEASING.—

"(A) COMPETITIVE OR NONCOMPETITIVE BASIS.—The Secretary shall issue a lease, easement, or right-of-way under paragraph (1) on a competitive basis unless the Secretary determines after public notice of a proposed lease, easement, or right-of-way that there is no competitive interest.

"(B) SCHEDULE OF OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY LEASE SALES.—The Secretary shall, after providing an opportunity for public notice and comment, publish and periodically update a schedule not less frequently than every 5 years of areas that may be available for leasing in the future for offshore renewable energy projects, indicating, to the extent possible, the timing of site identification activities, the timing of designation of any area to be leased, the anticipated size of such areas, the timing of lease sales, and the location of leasing activities.

"(C) MULTI-FACTOR BIDDING.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may consider non-monetary factors when competitively awarding leases under paragraph (1), which may include commitments made by the bidder to—

"(I) support educational, training, and skills development, including supporting or increasing access to registered apprenticeship programs and pre-apprenticeship programs that have an articulation agreement with a registered apprenticeships program for offshore renewable energy projects;

"(II) support development of domestic supply chains for offshore renewable energy projects, including development of ports and other energy infrastructure necessary to facilitate offshore renewable energy projects;

"(III) establish a community benefit agreement with 1 or more community or stakeholder groups that may be impacted by the development and operation of an offshore renewable energy project, which may include covered entities;

"(IV) make investments to evaluate, monitor, improve, and mitigate impacts to the health and biodiversity of ecosystems and wildlife from the development and operation of an offshore renewable energy project;

"(V) support the development and use of shared transmission infrastructure connecting to offshore renewable energy projects; and

"(VI) make other investments determined appropriate by the Secretary.

"(ii) CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS.—When considering non-monetary factors under this subparagraph, the Secretary may—

"(I) evaluate the quality of commitments made by the bidder; and

"(II) reward finalized binding agreements above assurances for future commitments.

"(iii) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph:

"(I) COVERED ENTITY.—The term 'covered entity' has the meaning given such term in section 34(k).

"(II) REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.—The term 'registered apprenticeship program' means an apprenticeship program registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the National Apprenticeship Act; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).";

(3) by amending paragraph (4) to read as follows:

"(4) REQUIREMENTS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure that any activity under this subsection is carried out in a manner that provides for—

"(i) safety;

"(ii) protection of the environment, which includes facilitation of the generation, transmission, and storage of zero-emission electricity;

"(iii) prevention of waste;

"(iv) conservation of the natural resources of the outer Continental Shelf;

"(v) coordination with relevant Federal agencies and State, Tribal, and local governments;

“(vi) protection of national security interests of the United States;

“(vii) protection of correlative rights in the outer Continental Shelf;

“(viii) a fair return to the United States for any lease, easement, or right-of-way under this subsection;

“(ix) reasonable uses (as determined by the Secretary) of the exclusive economic zone, the high seas, and the territorial seas;

“(x) consideration of—

“(I) the location of, and any schedule relating to, a lease, easement, or right-of-way for an area of the outer Continental Shelf; and

“(II) any other use of the sea or seabed, including use for a fishery, a sealane, a potential site of a deepwater port, or navigation;

“(xi) public notice and comment on any proposal submitted for a lease, easement, or right-of-way under this subsection;

"(xii) oversight, inspection, research, monitoring, and enforcement relating to a lease, easement, or right-of-way under this subsection; and

"(xiii) satisfaction of any applicable State and Federal renewable and clean energy mandates, targets, and goals.

"(B) PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than January 1, 2026, the Secretary shall require, as a term or condition of each lease, right-of-way, and easement, as applicable, for an offshore renewable energy project that the holder of the lease, right-of-way, or easement, (and any successor or assignee) and its agents, contractors, and subcontractors engaged in the construction of any facilities for such offshore renewable energy project agree, for purposes of such construction, to negotiate and become a party to a project labor agreement with 1 or more labor organizations. A project labor agreement shall bind all contractors and subcontractors on the project through the inclusion of appropriate specifications in all relevant solicitation provisions and contract documents. The Secretary shall not approve a construction and operations plan with respect to any offshore renewable energy project until being assured by the lessee that such project labor agreement will be maintained for the duration of the project.

"(ii) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph:

"(I) CONSTRUCTION.—The term 'construction' includes reconstruction, rehabilitation, modernization, alteration, conversion, extension, repair, or improvement of any facility, structure, or other real property (including any onshore facilities) for an offshore renewable energy project.

"(II) LABOR ORGANIZATION.—The term 'labor organization' means a labor organization as defined in section 2(5) of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 152(5))—

"(aa) of which building and construction employees are members; and

"(bb) that directly, or through its affiliates, sponsors a registered apprenticeship program.

"(III) PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENT.—The term 'project labor agreement' means a pre-hire collective bargaining agreement with 1 or more labor organizations that establishes the terms and conditions of employment for a specific construction project and is an agreement described in section 8(e) and (f) of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 158(f)).

"(IV) REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.—The term 'registered apprenticeship program' means an apprenticeship program registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the National Apprenticeship Act; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).

"(C) DOMESTIC CONTENT.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—With respect to the construction of facilities for an offshore renewable energy project that begins after January 1, 2033, the Secretary shall require that—

"(I) all structural iron and steel products that are (upon completion of construction) components of such facilities for an offshore renewable energy project shall be produced in the United States; and

"(II) not less than 80 percent of the total costs of all manufactured products that are (upon completion of construction) components of such facilities shall be attributable to manufactured products which are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States.

"(ii) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the requirements of clause (i) in any case or category of cases in which the Secretary finds that—

“(I) applying clause (i) would be inconsistent with the public interest;

“(II) such products are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality; or

“(III) the use of such products will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

“(iii) PUBLIC NOTIFICATION.—If the Secretary receives a request for a waiver under this subparagraph, the Secretary shall make available to the public a copy of the request and information available to the Secretary concerning the request, and shall allow for informal public input on the request for at least 15 business days prior to making a finding based on the request. The Secretary shall make the request and accompanying information available to the public by electronic means, including on the official public Internet site of the Department of the Interior.

"(iv) INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—This paragraph shall be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.";

(4) by amending paragraph (7) to read as follows:

"(7) COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall provide for coordination and consultation with—

"(A) the Governor of any State or the executive of any local government that may be affected by a lease, easement, or right-of-way under this subsection; and

"(B) Indian Tribes (following the procedures of the President's Memorandum of Uniform Standards for Tribal Consultation, issued on November 30, 2022 (87 Fed. Reg. 74479), or any subsequent order) before undertaking any activities under this subsection that may have a direct, indirect, or cumulative impact on—

"(i) the land, including allotted, ceded, or traditional land, or interests in such land of an Indian Tribe or member of an Indian Tribe;

"(ii) Tribal land, cultural practices, resources, or access to traditional areas of cultural or religious importance;

"(iii) any part of any Federal land that shares a border with Indian country, as such term is defined in section 1151 of title 18, United States Code;

"(iv) the protected rights of an Indian Tribe, whether or not such rights are enumerated in a treaty, including water, hunting, gathering, and fishing rights;

"(v) the ability of an Indian Tribe to govern or provide services to members of the Indian Tribe;

"(vi) the relationship between the Federal Government and an Indian Tribe; or

"(vii) the trust responsibility of the Federal Government to an Indian Tribe.";

(5) by amending paragraph (10) to read as follows:

"(10) APPLICABILITY.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—This subsection does not apply to any area on the outer Continental Shelf within the exterior boundaries of any unit of the National Park System, National Wildlife Refuge System, or National Marine Sanctuary System, or any National Monument.

"(B) CERTAIN TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), if otherwise authorized pursuant to the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.), the Secretary may issue a lease, easement, or right-of-way to enable the transmission of electricity generated by an offshore renewable energy project.

"(ii) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—In issuing a lease, easement, or right-of-way under clause (i), the Secretary may approve and regulate the construction and operation of such transmission facilities (including electrical substations and other related infrastructure) for the transmission of electricity generated by such projects in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts.

"(iii) COORDINATION.—In regulating the construction and operation of transmission facilities and related infrastructure under clause (ii), the Secretary shall coordinate with the Secretary of Commerce to ensure the duration of any necessary authorizations of such facilities under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act aligns with the duration of the relevant leases, easements, or rights-of-way issued under clause (i)."; and

(6) by adding at the end the following:

"(11) PLANNING AREA IMPACT STUDIES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning three years after the date of enactment of this paragraph, before holding any lease sale pursuant to paragraph (1) for an area, the Secretary shall conduct a study of such area, or the wider planning area that includes such area, in order to establish information needed for assessment and management of the environmental impacts on the human, marine, and coastal environments of the outer Continental Shelf and the coastal areas which may be affected by offshore renewable energy projects in such area or planning area.

"(B) INCLUSIONS.—A study conducted under subparagraph (A) shall—

"(i) incorporate the best available existing science and data;

"(ii) identify areas for which there is insufficient science and data; and

"(iii) include consideration of the cumulative impacts (including potential navigational impacts) of offshore renewable energy projects on human, marine, and coastal environments.

"(C) USE OF DATA AND ASSESSMENTS.—The Secretary shall use the data and assessments included in studies conducted under this paragraph, as appropriate, when deciding—

"(i) which portions of an area or region are most appropriate to make available for leasing; and

"(ii) whether to issue any permit or other authorization that is necessary to carry out an offshore renewable energy project.

"(D) NEPA APPLICABILITY.—The Secretary shall not consider a study conducted under subparagraph (A) to be a major Federal action under section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).

"(12) CAPACITY BUILDING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, may award grants to entities to build organizational capacity and enhance engagement opportunities related to offshore renewable energy project development, including environmental reviews and permitting activities of such projects.

"(B) PURPOSES.—Grants awarded under subparagraph (A) shall be used by entities to—

"(i) enable States, Indian Tribes, affected ocean users, and nonprofit associations that represent affected ocean users to compile data, conduct analyses, educate stakeholders, and complete other activities relating to offshore renewable energy project development;

"(ii) engage in planning activities and in the development of offshore wind projects for the purposes of—

"(I) determining potential economic, social, public health, and environmental benefits and impacts; and

"(II) identifying opportunities to mitigate such impacts;

"(iii) facilitate siting of offshore renewable energy projects and associated electric transmission infrastructure; and

"(iv) hire and train personnel, and other activities designed to increase the capacity of States, Indian Tribes, and nonprofit associations, as applicable, to carry out activities described in clauses (i) through (iii).

"(C) PRIORITIZATION.—When awarding grants under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall prioritize awarding grants that will be used to build organizational capacity and enhance community engagement opportunities of Indian Tribes.

"(D) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this paragraph $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030.''.

(d) RESERVATIONS.—Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1341(a)) is amended to read as follows—

''(a) WITHDRAWAL OF UNLEASED LANDS BY THE PRESIDENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President of the United States may, from time to time, withdraw from disposition any of the unleased lands of the outer Continental Shelf.

''(2) REVERSAL FOR CERTAIN OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS.—With respect to a withdrawal under paragraph (1) of unleased lands from disposition, the President may reverse such a withdrawal only to allow for leasing under section (8)(p)(1)(C) and only if the President determines that environmental, national security, or national or regional energy conditions or demands have changed such that a reversal would be in the public interest.''.

(e) CITIZEN SUITS, COURT JURISDICTION, AND JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Section 23(c)(2) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1349(c)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

"(2) Any action of the Secretary to approve, require modification of, or disapprove any exploration plan or development and production plan under this Act, or any plan, final lease, easement, or right-of-way granted pursuant to section (8)(p)(1) (and any related final Federal agency actions), shall be subject to judicial review only in a United States court of appeals for a circuit in which an affected State is located.".

(f) REPORT ON DECOMMISSIONING OF OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS.—Not later than 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to Congress, and make publicly available, a report evaluating decommissioning options for offshore renewable energy projects (and associated electric transmission infrastructure), including an assessment of the potential for the holder of a lease, easement, or right-of-way to keep facilities in place or otherwise convert such facilities to artificial reefs to support marine habitats, provided that such facilities will not adversely impact navigation, national security, the marine environment, Tribal uses, or other competing uses of the outer Continental Shelf.

(g) UPDATING REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall issue any necessary regulations to carry out this section and the amendments made by this section.

SEC. 512. COMPENSATION FOR OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS.

The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 34. OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY COMPENSATION FUND.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States the Offshore Renewable Energy Compensation Fund, which shall be used by the Secretary, or a third-party the Secretary enters into a contract with, to provide to covered entities—

"(1) payments for claims—

"(A) described under subsection (f)(1); and

"(B) verified pursuant to subsection (d)(1); and

"(2) grants to carry out mitigation activities described in subsection (f)(2).

"(b) AVAILABILITY OF FUND.—The Fund shall be available to the Secretary without fiscal year limitations for the purpose of providing payments and grants under subsection (a).

"(c) ACCOUNTS.—The Fund shall—

"(1) consist of the royalties, fees, rents, bonuses, and other payments deposited under section 8(p)(2)(D); and

"(2) be divided into separate area accounts from which payments and grants shall be provided based on the area in which damages occur.

"(d) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall establish, by regulation, a process to—

"(1) file, process, and verify claims for purposes of providing payments under subsection (a)(1); and

"(2) apply for a grant provided under subsection (a)(2).

"(e) PAYMENT AMOUNT.—Payments provided under subsection (a)(1) shall—

"(1) be based on the scope of the verified claim;

"(2) be fair and provided efficiently and in a transparent manner; and

"(3) if the covered entity receiving the payment has or will receive direct compensation for the verified claim pursuant to a community benefit agreement or other agreement between such covered entity and a holder of a lease, easement, or right-of-way, be reduced by an amount that is equal to the amount of such direct compensation.

"(f) CLAIMS; MITIGATION GRANTS.—

"(1) CLAIMS.—A payment may be provided under subsection (a)(1) for a verified claim to—

"(A) replace or repair gear that was lost or damaged by the development, construction, operation, or decommissioning of an offshore renewable energy project; or

"(B) replace income that was lost from the development, construction, operation, or decommissioning of an offshore renewable energy project.

"(2) MITIGATION GRANTS.—If the Secretary determines that there are sufficient amounts in an area account of the Fund to provide payments for all verified claims at any given time, the Secretary may use amounts in the Fund to provide grants to covered entities, and other entities determined appropriate by the Secretary, to mitigate the potential effects of development, construction, operation, and decommissioning of an offshore renewable energy project, including by paying for gear changes, navigation technology improvements, and other measures to enhance the safety and resiliency of the covered entities near an offshore renewable energy project.

"(g) ADVISORY GROUP.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and regularly convene an advisory group that shall provide recommendations on the development and administration of this section.

"(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The advisory group shall—

"(A) be comprised of individuals—

"(i) appointed by the Secretary; and

"(ii) representing the geographic diversity of areas impacted by the development, construction, operation, or decommissioning of offshore renewable energy projects; and

"(B) include representatives from—

"(i) recreational fishing interests;

"(ii) commercial fishing interests;

"(iii) Tribal fishing interests;

"(iv) the National Marine Fisheries Services;

"(v) the fisheries science community; and "(vi) other fields of expertise necessary to effectively develop and administer this section, as determined by the Secretary.

"(3) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The Secretary may provide amounts to any member of the advisory group to pay for travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for an employee of an agency under section 5703 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the home or regular place of business of the member in the performance of the duties of the advisory group.

"(h) INSUFFICIENT FUNDS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary determines that an area account does not contain a sufficient amount to provide payments under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary may, not more than once each calendar year, require any holder of an offshore renewable energy lease located within the area covered by the area account to pay an amount specified by the Secretary, which shall be deposited into such area account.

"(2) AMOUNT.—No holder of an offshore renewable energy lease shall be required to pay an amount under paragraph (1) in excess of $3 per acre of the leased land described in paragraph (1).

"(i) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The Secretary may use up to 15 percent of the amount deposited into the Fund under section 8(p)(2)(D) during a given fiscal year for administrative expenses to carry out this section.

"(j) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to Congress, and make publicly available, an annual report on activities carried out under this section, including a description of claims filed and the amount of payments and grants provided.

"(k) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) COVERED ENTITY.—The term 'covered entity' means—

"(A) a community, stakeholder, or Tribal interest—

"(i) that uses a geographic space of a lease area, or uses resources harvested from a geographic space of a lease area; and

"(ii) for which such use is directly and adversely impacted by the development, construction, operation, or decommissioning of an offshore renewable energy project located in such leased area; or

“(B) a regional association, cooperative, non-profit organization, commission, or corporation that—

“(i) serves a community, stakeholder, or Tribal interest described in subparagraph (A); and

“(ii) acts on behalf of such a community, stakeholder, or Tribal interest for purposes of this section, including by submitting a claim for a covered entity.

“(2) FUND.—The term ‘Fund’ means the Offshore Renewable Energy Compensation Fund established under subsection (a).

“(3) LEASE AREA.—The term ‘lease area’ means an area covered by an offshore renewable energy lease.

“(4) OFFSHORE RENEWABLE ENERGY LEASE.—The term ‘offshore renewable energy lease’ means a lease, easement, or right-of-way granted under section 8(p)(1)(C).”.

SEC. 513. INTEROPERABILITY OF OFFSHORE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE.

(a) STUDY.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall complete and publish on the website of the Department of Energy a study that assesses the need to, and challenges of, developing and standardizing interoperable electric grid components, systems, and technologies in support of shared offshore transmission networks. Such study shall include recommendations for Congress, State, Tribal, and local governments, manufacturers of electric grid components, systems, and technologies, Transmission Organizations, offshore electricity generation project developers, and appropriate standards organizations to help ensure interoperability of electric grid components, systems, and technologies between offshore electricity generation projects and shared offshore infrastructure connecting to onshore transmission systems.

(b) INTEROPERABILITY STANDARD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy shall establish and implement a program to identify, develop, support, document, and encourage the adoption of standards necessary to maximize the interoperability of electric grid components, systems, and technologies to accelerate the implementation and delivery of electricity generated by offshore electricity generation projects through shared electricity transmission infrastructure.

(2) GOALS.—The goals of establishing and implementing the program under paragraph (1) shall be—

(A) to harmonize and standardize functional specifications of electric grid components, systems, and technologies to maximize the interoperability of electric grid components, systems, and technologies across types and manufacturers;

(B) to hasten adoption of shared electric transmission infrastructure, including interregional transmission infrastructure, for offshore electricity generation by encouraging cooperation among manufacturers of electric grid components, systems, or technologies in order to—

(i) maximize interoperability of such manufacturers' electric grid components, systems, or technologies;

(ii) reduce offshore electricity generation project delays and cost overruns;

(iii) manage power grid complexity; and

(iv) enhance electric grid resilience, reliability, and cybersecurity; and

(C) to identify common technical specifications to effectively and securely measure, monitor, control, and protect offshore electricity generation and electric transmission infrastructure from the point of generation to load centers.

(3) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—Under the program established and implemented under paragraph (1), the Secretary may provide grants to—

(A) engage equipment manufacturers and industry stakeholders in collaborative platforms, including workshops and forums;

(B) identify current challenges and propose solutions to improve interoperability of electric grid components, systems, and technologies;

(C) develop a set of voluntary industry standards to maximize interoperability of electric grid components, systems, and technologies that meet the goals described in paragraph (2); and

(D) promote data sharing alignment with the Department of Energy, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to integrate oceanographic, wildlife, and grid planning data relevant to offshore transmission corridors.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Energy to carry out this section $5,000,000, to remain available until expended.

(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''Transmission Organization'' has the meaning given such term in section 3(29) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

TITLE VI—PROTECTING CONSUMERS IN ELECTRICITY REGULATION

SEC. 601. UTILITY EARNINGS TIED TO RATEPAYER BENEFITS.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO THE FEDERAL POWER ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 219 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824s) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by striking ''Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Commission shall establish, by rule,'' and inserting ''The Commission shall issue such rules as may be necessary to establish''; and

(ii) by inserting ", improving efficiency," after "ensuring reliability";

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "The rule shall" and inserting "The rules issued under this section shall";

(ii) in paragraph (1), by inserting ", and operational improvements for," after "capital investment in";

(iii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) by inserting "or other incentive mechanism" after "return on equity"; and

(II) by inserting "or incentivizes improvements that increase the efficiency of the transmission of electric energy and reduce costs for consumers" after "(including related transmission technologies)";

(iv) in paragraph (3), by inserting ", including performance-based measures," after "other measures"; and

(v) in paragraph (4)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by striking "; and" and inserting a semicolon;

(II) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and

(III) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(C) amounts determined pursuant to shared savings frameworks or other incentive mechanisms prescribed in such rules."; and

(C) by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

"(c) TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION-BASED INCENTIVES.—

"(1) TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP.—In a rule issued under this section, the Commission shall, to the extent within its jurisdiction, provide for incentives to each transmitting utility or electric utility that joins a Transmission Organization.

"(2) INITIAL MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVE.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Commission shall provide for an electric utility to yield a return on equity incentive—

"(A) of not more than 50 basis points for the 3-year period beginning on the date on which the electric utility joins a Transmission Organization; and

"(B) the transfer of a transmitting utility from 1 transmission organization to another shall not trigger a new period under subparagraph (A).

"(3) REGIONAL AND INTERREGIONAL FACILITY INCENTIVE.—After the expiration of the period under paragraph (2)(A), the Commission may provide a return on equity incentive of not more than 75 basis points with respect to transmission facilities of such utility that—

"(A) provide demonstrable benefits to customers on a regional or interregional basis, as determined by the Commission; and

"(B) are selected in a transmission planning process conducted by a Transmission Organization or by 2 or more such organizations on an interregional basis.

"(4) INCENTIVES FOR NON-MEMBERS.—In the case of an electric utility that is not a member of a Transmission Organization, the Commission may provide an additional return on equity incentive of not more than 25 basis points with respect to transmission facilities that satisfy the criteria set forth in paragraph (3).

"(5) GUARDRAILS.—In determining whether, and at what level, to provide incentives under this subsection, the Commission may consider—

"(A) measurable customer benefits, including reliability, resilience, and congestion cost reductions;

"(B) cost discipline, including consistency with least-cost planning and mitigation of excessive capital bias; and

"(C) the persistence and magnitude of expected benefits.

"(6) DURATION AND REVIEW.—The Commission may establish time limits for incentives under this subsection and shall provide for periodic review and adjustment or termination of such incentives if the underlying bases for the incentives no longer exist.

"(7) METHOD OF COST RECOVERY.—The Commission shall ensure that any costs recoverable pursuant to this subsection may be recovered by such utility through the transmission rates charged by such utility or through the transmission rates charged by the Transmission Organization that provides transmission service to such utility.''.

(2) RULEMAKINGS.—

(A) DEADLINE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission shall revise the rule issued under section 219 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824s) to implement the amendment made by paragraph (1)(C).

(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In revising the rule specified in paragraph (1)(C) with respect to the implementation of the return on equity incentive under section 219(c) of the Federal Power Act, as amended by such paragraph, the Commission shall take into consideration the following:

(i) The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking titled ''Electric Transmission Incentives Policy Under Section 219 of the Federal Power Act'', published in the Federal Register on April 2, 2020 (85 Fed. Reg. 18784).

(ii) The Supplemental Notice of Proposed Rulemaking titled ''Electric Transmission Incentives Policy Under Section

219 of the Federal Power Act'', published in the Federal Register on April 26, 2021 (86 Fed. Reg. 21972).

(b) RULEMAKING ON SHARED SAVINGS FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSMITTING UTILITIES SUBJECT TO FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION JURISDICTION.—

(1) RULE REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Commission shall issue a final rule under section 219(b)(3) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824s(b)(3)), as amended by subsection (a), that establishes a framework under which a covered transmitting utility may recover a portion of verified cost savings attributable to a qualifying action of such transmitting utility as an incentive (in this subsection referred to as the ''shared savings framework'').

(2) METHODOLOGIES.—The Commission shall develop and include in the rule under paragraph (1) standardized methodologies, applicable across similarly situated transmission segments, as follows:

(A) BASELINE PERFORMANCE METHODOLOGIES.—Methodologies, developed in consultation with the Secretary, for covered transmitting utilities to determine the annual baseline performance of transmission facilities or transmission segments absent qualifying actions—

(i) by measuring the baseline performance of such a transmission facility or transmission segment—

(I) through the actual amount of electrical energy entering and leaving such facility or segment (commonly referred to as ''direct metering''); or

(II) if the method under subclause (I) is not feasible, through an estimation of such amount consistent with modeling methodologies prescribed by the Commission; and

(ii) by normalizing data to ensure such baseline performance accounts for variability in exogenous factors determined by the Commission, such as variability in—

(I) weather;

(II) demand over time;

(III) upgrades, interconnections, or operational changes made by other utilities, Independent System Operators or Regional Transmission Organizations, or other entities determined relevant by the Commission; or

(IV) other conditions affecting demand or generation.

(B) METHODOLOGIES RELATING TO COST SAVINGS.—Methodologies for covered transmitting utilities to estimate and calculate, and for independent evaluators to verify, the cost savings attributable to qualifying actions under the shared savings framework, taking into account—

(i) the baseline performance of any transmission facility or transmission segment with respect to which a qualifying action is conducted; and

(ii) price proxies, determined according to a methodology prescribed by the Commission, for the value of electric energy transmitted (which may include, for a region managed by an Independent System Operator or Regional Transmission Organization, the locational marginal price corresponding to the location on the electric grid where an injection or withdrawal of power is modeled (commonly referred to as a "pricing node")).

(C) METHODOLOGIES RELATING TO RECOVERABLE PERCENTAGE AND RATE RECOVERY TIMELINE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Methodologies for covered transmitting utilities to determine, taking into account the factors described in clause (ii), the following:

(I) The total percentage of cost savings attributable to a qualifying action that such a utility may recover as an incentive under the shared savings framework, which may not be less than 10 percent or greater than 60 percent of such total attributable cost savings (in this subsection referred to as the "recoverable percentage" of such savings).

(II) The period of time during which such a utility may recover amounts as an incentive for such an action, which may not be shorter than a 2-year period or longer than a 5-year period (in this subsection referred to as the ''rate recovery timeline'' for such action).

(ii) FACTORS.—The factors described in this clause are the following:

(I) The extent of financial or operational risk to be assumed by a covered transmitting utility in conducting a qualifying action.

(II) The baseline performance for transmission facilities or transmission segments with respect to which such action is to be conducted.

(III) The replicability or demonstration value of such action.

(IV) The duration of cost savings predicted to result from such action and whether such cost savings will remain consistent over such duration.

(V) The extent to which such action is expected to result in additional benefits, such as improvements to the resilience or the reliable operation of the bulk-power system, reductions to transmission congestion, or reductions to greenhouse gas emissions.

(VI) Such other factors as the Commission may determine relevant to ensure the incentive is performance-based, transparent, and cost-effective.

(3) INITIAL FILING REQUIRED.—To be considered for an incentive under the shared savings framework for the conduct of a qualifying action, a covered transmitting utility shall submit to the Commission an initial filing, the contents of which shall be verified by an independent evaluator determined appropriate by the Commission, that includes the following:

(A) An identification of the baseline performance of any transmission facility or transmission segment with respect to which such action is to be conducted for the 1-year period preceding the date on which such conduct is to be commenced, determined by such utility pursuant to an applicable methodology under paragraph (2)(A) (including the data underlying such calculation).

(B) A description of such action, including an analysis of improvements expected to result from such action.

(C) The rate recovery timeline for such action and the recoverable percentage of cost savings attributable to such action, determined pursuant to an applicable methodology under paragraph (2)(C).

(D) An estimate, developed pursuant to an applicable methodology under paragraph (2)(B), of the cost savings to result from such action for—

(i) the 1-year period beginning on the date on which the conduct of such action commences; and

(ii) the duration of the rate recovery timeline for such action.

(E) A claim for 50 percent of the recoverable percentage of cost savings estimated under subparagraph (D)(i).

(F) An agreement by such utility to file with the Commission the annual reports required under paragraph (4), the contents of which shall be verified by an independent evaluator determined appropriate by the Commission.

(4) ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIRED.—Beginning 1 year after the date on which a covered trans-

mitting utility submits an initial filing for a qualifying action under paragraph (3), and on an annual basis thereafter until the end of the rate recovery timeline for such action determined under subparagraph (C) of such paragraph or until such action no longer results in cost savings, whichever occurs first, such utility shall file with the Commission a report containing, with respect to the qualifying action of such utility, the following:

(A) Data on the performance during the preceding year of any transmission facility or transmission segment with respect to which such action was conducted, and a comparison of such performance to the baseline performance of that transmission facility or transmission segment determined pursuant to an applicable methodology under paragraph (2)(A) for such year.

(B) The actual cost savings attributable to the qualifying action for the preceding year, calculated pursuant to an applicable methodology under paragraph (2)(B).

(C) If such utility expects cost savings to result from the qualifying action during the following year, an estimate, developed pursuant to an applicable methodology under paragraph (2)(B), of the cost savings for such following year.

(D) A claim for the following:

(i) An amount that is the recoverable percentage of the actual cost savings for the preceding year calculated under subparagraph (B) minus any amount previously recovered based on an estimate of cost savings for such year under paragraph (5)(A) or paragraph (5)(B)(ii), as the case may be.

(ii) If the report includes an estimate of cost savings for the following year under paragraph (5), an amount that is 50 percent of the recoverable percentage of such estimated cost savings.

(E) If such utility finds that the total amount recovered for a year under paragraph (5) exceeds the amount equal to the total recoverable percentage of the actual cost savings for that year under subparagraph (B), an identification of the excess amount.

(5) RECOVERY MECHANISM.—

(A) RATE ADJUSTMENT BASED ON INITIAL FILING.—Not later than 60 days after receiving an initial filing of a covered transmitting utility under paragraph (3), the Commission shall provide to such utility a rate adjustment under which such utility may recover the amount claimed under paragraph (3)(D).

(B) RATE ADJUSTMENT BASED ON ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 60 days after receiving an annual report of a covered transmitting utility under paragraph (4), the Commission shall provide to such utility a rate adjustment under which—

(i) subject to subparagraph (C), such utility may recover the amount claimed under paragraph (4)(D)(i); and

(ii) if the report included a claim under paragraph (4)(D)(ii), such utility may recover the amount so claimed.

(C) RECONCILIATION.—If a utility identifies an excess amount under paragraph (4)(E), or the Commission determines the information reported for that year under paragraph (4) is insufficient for purposes of this paragraph, the

Commission shall credit the difference to ratepayers through a rate adjustment.

(6) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING ADDITIONAL RULEMAKINGS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(A) following the issuance of the rule under paragraph (1), the Commission should revise such rule, or issue additional rules under the authority of section 219(b)(3) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824s(b)(3)), as amended by subsection (a), to expand the shared savings framework to additional categories of measurable, demonstrable, and verifiable covered transmission actions;

(B) any such rule should include a version of the methodologies developed under paragraph (2) adapted for such additional categories; and

(C) any such rule should take into account the findings of the most recently conducted study under subsection (e).

(c) GUIDANCE FOR ELECTRIC UTILITIES NOT SUBJECT TO FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION JURISDICTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary,

in coordination with the Commission and State regulatory authorities, shall develop and publish on a publicly available website of the Department of Energy guidance to support State regulatory authorities in establishing frameworks under which covered electric utilities may recover a portion of verified cost savings attributable to a covered utility action as an incentive.

(2) MINIMUM ELEMENTS.—The guidance under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) guidance, developed in accordance with paragraph (3), for determining the baseline performance of a covered electric utility absent a covered utility action;

(B) guidance, developed in accordance with paragraph (4), for determining the cost savings attributable to a covered utility action;

(C) guidance for the measurement and verification of a covered utility action, and any cost savings attributable to such action, by an independent evaluator determined appropriate by the State regulatory authority concerned;

(D) guidance on potential mechanisms by which covered electric utilities may recover a portion of the verified cost savings attributable to a covered utility action, including through the provision of rate adjustments by State regulatory authorities; and

(E) such other elements as the Secretary determines appropriate to ensure the framework specified in paragraph (1) is transparent, performance-based, cost-effective, and consistent with State ratemaking practices.

(3) METHODOLOGY FOR DETERMINING BASELINE PERFORMANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In developing the guidance under paragraph (2)(A), the Secretary, acting through the heads of the Grid Deployment Office, Office of Electricity, and Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy of the Department of Energy, in coordination with the Commission, shall—

(i) consult with State regulatory authorities, Independent System Operators, Regional Transmission Organizations, and independent evaluators determined appropriate by the Secretary regarding such guidance;

(ii) include in such guidance technical guidance for normalizing data to ensure the baseline performance of a covered electric utility accounts for variability in exogenous factors, such as variability in—

(I) weather;

(II) demand over time;

(III) upgrades, interconnections, or operational changes made by other utilities, Independent System Operators or Regional Transmission Organizations, or other entities determined relevant by the Commission; or

(IV) other conditions affecting demand or generation, as determined by the Secretary; and

(iii) ensure such guidance supports consistent treatment across covered electric utilities within each category described in paragraph (5).

(B) SUPPORT FROM NATIONAL LABORATORIES.—The National Laboratories shall provide such technical support as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out this paragraph.

(4) GUIDANCE ON DETERMINING COST SAVINGS.—In developing the guidance under paragraph (2)(B), the Secretary shall—

(A) include in such guidance—

(i) principles to ensure that cost savings attributable to a covered utility action are calculated in a manner that takes into account price proxies for the value of electric energy and the baseline performance of the covered electric utility; and

(ii) tools, technical support, and reference data to assist State regulatory authorities in applying the principles specified in clause (i); and

(B) ensure such guidance supports consistent treatment across covered electric utilities within each category described in paragraph (5).

(5) APPLICABILITY TO UTILITY MARKET STRUCTURES.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary shall develop separate guidance for each category of covered electric utilities as follows:

(A) Vertically integrated utilities.

(B) Covered electric utilities that own or operate transmission infrastructure but not distribution or generation infrastructure.

(C) Covered electric utilities that own or operate distribution infrastructure but not transmission or generation infrastructure.

(D) Covered electric utilities that own or operate distribution and transmission infrastructure but not generation infrastructure.

(6) REVISIONS.—Upon the publication of each report under subsection (e), the Secretary shall determine whether to revise the guidance under paragraph (1), taking into account the contents of such report and the recommendations included therein.

(d) GRANT PROGRAM FOR STATE REGULATORY AUTHORITIES.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall establish a program under which the Secretary may award grants to State regulatory authorities to support the development, implementation, and oversight by such State regulatory authorities of frameworks under which covered electric utilities may recover a portion of verified cost savings attributable to a covered utility action as an incentive (in this subsection referred to as the ''grant program'').

(2) AUTHORIZED USES OF FUNDS.—Amounts awarded under the grant program may only be used to conduct the following activities:

(A) The development of a framework referred to in paragraph (1), or revision of an existing such framework, such that the framework is consistent with the guidance developed under subsection (c), including the following:

(i) The development, including the design or modeling, of methodologies consistent with the methodologies set forth under such guidance.

(ii) The development of data systems or other tools necessary for the development of the framework.

(iii) The issuance or revision of regulations necessary for the development of the framework.

(iv) The engagement with stakeholders with respect to the development of the framework.

(B) The implementation or oversight of a framework consistent with such guidance.

(3) PROHIBITED USE OF FUNDS.—No amounts awarded under the grant program may be used to pay a covered electric utility.

(4) GRANT RECIPIENT REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—As a condition of receiving amounts under the grant program, a State regulatory authority shall agree to submit to the Secretary, on an annual basis for the duration of the period in which such State regulatory authority expends such amounts, a report describing the activities carried out using such amounts.

(B) EFFECT OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—If a grant recipient fails to submit a report required under subparagraph (A), such recipient shall be ineligible for additional awards under this subsection until the report is submitted.

(5) ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM.—

(A) TECHNICAL SUPPORT; PUBLIC REGISTRY.—In carrying out the grant program, the Secretary shall—

(i) provide to grant recipients technical assistance in support of activities conducted using amounts awarded under the grant program; and

(ii) maintain a publicly accessible registry of the activities so conducted.

(B) REPORTING BY SECRETARY.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, and biennially thereafter for the duration of the grant program, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report containing—

(i) a summary of the activities conducted using amounts awarded under the grant program;

(ii) an assessment of the effectiveness of any framework implemented using such amounts; and

(iii) an identification of any barrier to the development, implementation, or oversight of a framework consistent with the guidance developed under subsection (c) and recommendations for addressing such barrier, as applicable.

(C) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available to the Secretary to carry out the grant program—

(i) not more than 70 percent may be awarded for the conduct of activities under paragraph (2)(A);

(ii) not less than 30 percent may be awarded for the conduct of activities under paragraph (2)(B); and

(iii) not more than 5 percent may be obligated or expended for Federal administrative expenses.

(e) STUDIES ON EFFECTS OF CERTAIN RATE TREATMENTS AND ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORKS.—

(1) STUDIES REQUIRED.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this section, and every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the Commission, shall—

(A) conduct a study on—

(i) inefficiencies in the electric power sector incentivized by existing rate treatments for the transmission of electric energy and any economic, environmental, or societal effect of such inefficiencies, including with respect to the customers of electric utilities, the reliable operation of the bulk-power system, and the deployment of cost-effective advanced transmission technologies; and

(ii) alternative frameworks for incentive-based, including performance-based, rate treatments for such transmission, such as the alternative frameworks described in paragraph (2); and

(B) publish on a publicly available website of the Department of Energy, and submit to the appropriate congressional committees, a report that includes—

(i) a detailed description of the findings of such study; and

(ii) recommendations of the Secretary to align rate treatments for the transmission of electric energy with the goals of lowering costs for the customers of electric utilities, enhancing the reliable operation of the bulk-power system, reducing transmission congestion and other inefficiencies in the transmission or delivery of electric energy, and encouraging the deployment of cost-effective advanced transmission technologies.

(2) EXAMPLES OF ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORKS.—The alternative frameworks described in this paragraph are the following:

(A) Shared savings frameworks.

(B) Revenue decoupling models, under which authorized revenues of utilities are separated from volumetric sales of electricity to reduce disincentives for energy efficiency and programs to reduce the consumption of, or peak demand for, electric energy.

(C) Return on equity adjustments, under which authorized utility returns are increased or decreased based on measurable factors such as risk profile, performance outcomes, or efficiency improvements.

(D) Multi-year rate plans, under which revenue requirements and performance expectations for utilities are established for a fixed multi-year period rather than through single-year rate cases.

(E) Earnings sharing mechanisms, under which earnings of utilities falling outside an authorized range as compared to the return on equity are shared between shareholders and ratepayers.

(F) Total expenditure models, under which capital and operating expenditures of utilities are treated on an equivalent basis to reduce bias toward capital investment.

(G) Performance scorecards, under which utilities are evaluated against transparent outcome-based metrics such as reliability, affordability, equity, or the reduction of emissions, with results informing regulatory decisions or incentive adjustments.

(3) SOURCES.—The Secretary shall ensure that each study under paragraph (1) is informed by—

(A) reports filed with the Commission pursuant to subsections (b) and (d) of this section, and section 304 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 825c);

(B) relevant reports issued by the National Laboratories; and

(C) such other studies, reports, and other data sources as the Secretary may determine appropriate.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADVANCED CONDUCTOR.—The term "advanced conductor" means an electric transmission conductor that, relative to a conductor being re-

placed on a given transmission or distribution line, is designed to substantially improve electrical or mechanical performance through the achievement of the following criteria, as determined by the Commission:

(A) A substantial increase in current-carrying capacity under normal operating conditions.

(B) A substantial reduction in electrical resistance or line losses under normal operating conditions.

(C) Operation at materially higher continuous allowable operating temperatures.

(D) A reduction in thermal sag or mechanical constraints that enables increased use of a transmission segment or facility.

(2) ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGY.—The term ‘‘advanced transmission technology’’ means any hardware or software that—

(A) increases the capacity, efficiency, reliability, resilience, or safety of transmission facilities and transmission technologies;

(B) is installed in addition to new or existing transmission facilities and transmission technologies—

(i) to give operators of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more situational awareness and control over the electric grid;

(ii) to make the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more efficient; or

(iii) to increase the transfer capacity of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies; and

(C) includes, but is not limited to, dynamic line ratings, advanced conductors, topology optimization, advanced power-flow controls, and other digital or physical systems that increase the usable transfer capability of the grid.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

(4) BULK-POWER SYSTEM; ELECTRIC UTILITY; INDEPENDENT SYSTEM OPERATOR; REGIONAL TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION; STATE REGULATORY

AUTHORITY; TRANSMITTING UTILITY.—The terms ''bulk-power system'', ''electric utility'', ''Independent System Operator'', ''Regional Transmission Organization'', ''State regulatory authority'', and ''transmitting utility'' have the meanings given such terms in section 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

(5) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(6) COVERED ELECTRIC UTILITY.—The term ''covered electric utility'' means an electric utility not subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission for ratemaking purposes under Part II of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824 et seq.).

(7) COVERED ACTION.—The term ''covered action''—

(A) means an action that would generate cost savings for ratepayers; and

(B) does not include the construction of a new facility or the complete reconstruction of an existing facility.

(8) COVERED TRANSMISSION ACTION.—The term ''covered transmission action'' means a covered action to improve the efficiency, capacity, reliability,

or resilience of 1 or more transmission facilities or transmission segments, including through—

(A) the replacement of a conductor on a transmission line within such a facility or segment with an advanced conductor; or

(B) the deployment of an advanced transmission technology.

(9) COVERED TRANSMITTING UTILITY.—The term ''covered transmitting utility'' means a transmitting utility subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission for ratemaking purposes under part II of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824 et seq.).

(10) COVERED UTILITY ACTION.—The term ''covered utility action'' means a covered action taken by an electric utility to—

(A) improve the efficiency of the generation, transmission, or distribution of electric energy, including by reducing the proportion of electrical energy lost during such generation, transmission, or distribution (including through the deployment of energy storage systems or other technologies); or

(B) reduce the consumption of, or peak demand for, electric energy, including through—

(i) a technological improvement, such as the deployment of high-efficiency appliances, smart thermostats, distributed energy resources, or building retrofits;

(ii) the establishment of a pricing mechanism to encourage customers of the electric utility to reduce such consumption or shift such demand to non-peak hours; or

(iii) any other action or program to incentivize or otherwise produce such a reduction or shift in demand.

(11) QUALIFYING ACTION.—The term ''qualifying action'' means a covered transmission action achieved through the reduction of transmission physical losses.

(12) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

(13) SIMILARLY SITUATED.—The term ''similarly situated'', with respect to transmission segments, means transmission segments that the Commission determines share comparable characteristics, such as voltage class, geography, load profile, or historical performance.

(14) TRANSMISSION PHYSICAL LOSS.—The term ''transmission physical loss'' means the amount

of electrical energy that enters a transmission segment but does not exit such transmission segment, as measured over a prescribed period of time.

(15) TRANSMISSION SEGMENT.—The term ''transmission segment'' means a functionally distinct portion of an interconnected transmission system (such as a single transmission line or multiple transmission lines within a prescribed zone, such as between prescribed substations), for which the amount of electrical energy transmitted and the amount of electrical energy lost during such transmission may be independently measured, as determined by the Commission.

(16) VERTICALLY INTEGRATED ELECTRIC UTILITY.—The term ''vertically integrated electric utility'' means a covered electric utility that—

(A) owns and operates generation, transmission, and distribution facilities; and

(B) directly provides retail electric service to end-use customers.

SEC. 602. CONSUMER PROTECTION FROM ENERGY MARKET MANIPULATION.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO THE FEDERAL POWER ACT.—

(1) ENFORCEMENT OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.—Section 316A of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C.

825o–1) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(c) PROHIBITION OR SUSPENSION FOR VIOLATIONS.—The Commission may prohibit, conditionally or unconditionally, permanently or for such period of time as the Commission determines to be appropriate, any person who is engaged or has engaged in practices constituting a violation of section 221 or 222 (and related rules and regulations) from engaging, directly or indirectly, in the business of purchasing or selling—

"(1) electric energy;

"(2) electric energy products, including financial transmission rights; or

"(3) transmission services subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission.".

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 314(d) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 825m(d)) is amended—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking "individual" and inserting "person"; and

(ii) by inserting "or 222" after "section 221";

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''with respect to a person who is an individual,'' before ''acting''; and

(C) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting '', directly or indirectly,'' after ''engaging'';

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''; or'' and inserting a semicolon;

(iii) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(iv) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) electric energy products, including financial transmission rights; or''.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO NATURAL GAS ACT.—

(1) PROHIBITION ON FILING FALSE INFORMATION.—The Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 4A the following:

''SEC. 4B. PROHIBITION ON FILING FALSE INFORMATION.

''No person shall willfully and knowingly report to a Federal agency or private-sector price-reporting agency, with intent to fraudulently affect the data being compiled by the Federal agency or private-sector price-reporting agency, any information relating to the transportation or sale of natural gas subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission (including information relating to the availability and prices of natural gas sold at wholesale and in interstate commerce and information relating to the operation of facilities for the transportation and sale of natural gas at wholesale and in interstate commerce) that the person knows to be false at the time of the reporting.''.

(2) CIVIL PENALTY AUTHORITY.—Section 22 of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717t–1) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) PROHIBITION OR SUSPENSION FOR VIOLATIONS.—The Commission may prohibit, conditionally or unconditionally, permanently or for such period of time as the Commission determines to be appropriate, any person who is engaged or has engaged in practices constituting a violation of section 4A or 4B (including related rules and regulations) from engaging, directly or indirectly, in the business of purchasing or selling—

''(1) natural gas; or

''(2) transmission services subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission.''.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 20(d) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717s(d)) is amended—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ‘‘individual’’ and inserting ‘‘person’’;

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting ‘‘with respect to a person who is an individual,’’ before ‘‘acting’’; and

(C) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ‘‘, directly or indirectly,’’ after ‘‘engaging’’.

SEC. 603. AVOIDING COST SHIFTS ONTO FAMILIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 111(d) of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2621(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

‘‘(22) LARGE LOAD FACILITY CLASS.—

‘‘(A) CLASSIFICATION.—Large load facilities shall be considered a class of electric consumers.

‘‘(B) COST RECOVERY RELATING TO LARGE LOAD FACILITY CLASS.—Each electric utility that provides electric service to a class of electric consumers described in subparagraph (A) shall fully recover from such class all costs associated with any upgrade made to the generation, transmission, or distribution facilities of the electric grid, including local facilities, in order to meet the demand for electric energy from such class, including in the event that a large load facility ceases operations or uses less electric energy than projected at the time of such upgrade.

"(23) GRID RELIABILITY FOR LARGE LOAD FACILITIES.—Each electric utility shall prioritize, among requests from owners or operators of large load facilities for electric service, such a request under which the owner or operator agrees to employ—

"(A) features that reduce the demand for electric energy from the electric grid during times of peak demand, including—

"(i) energy efficiency or energy conservation measures;

"(ii) onsite energy storage; or

"(iii) demand response or load flexibility technologies; and

"(B) zero-emission electric energy generated onsite or procured within the same balancing authority through a power purchase agreement to meet all of the demand of the large load facility for electric energy.".

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 111 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2621) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of subsection (d):

"(1) LARGE LOAD FACILITY.—The term 'large load facility'—

"(A) means a facility, or an aggregation of facilities at a single site, with respect to which the peak demand of such facility or such aggregation of facilities exceeds 75 megawatts; and

"(B) does not include an existing facility with respect to which any increased demand is predominantly caused by electrification or measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"(2) ZERO-EMISSION ELECTRIC ENERGY.—The term 'zero-emission electric energy' means electric energy generated without emitting greenhouse gases, including from solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, tidal, fission, or fusion energy.".

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) OBLIGATIONS TO CONSIDER AND DETERMINE.—Section 112 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2622) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following:

"(9)(A) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, each State regulatory authority (with respect to each electric utility for which the State has ratemaking authority) and each nonregulated utility shall commence consideration under section 111, or set a hearing date for consideration, with respect to each standard established by paragraphs (22) and (23) of section 111(d).

"(B) Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this paragraph, each State regulatory authority (with respect to each electric utility for which the State has ratemaking authority), and each nonregulated electric utility shall complete the consideration and make the determination under section 111 with respect to each standard established by paragraphs (22) and (23) of section 111(d).

"(C) Not later than 30 days after completing the determination and making a determination under section 111 with respect to each standard established by paragraphs (22) and (23) of section 111(d), each State regulatory authority (with respect to each electric utility for which the State has ratemaking authority), and each nonregulated electric utility shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report detailing the process used for consideration and an explanation for the determination.'';

(B) in subsection (c)—

(i) by striking ''subsection (b)(2)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)''; and

(ii) by inserting ''In the case of the standard established by paragraphs (22) and (23) of section 111(d), the reference contained in this subsection to the date of enactment of this Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the date of enactment of such paragraphs (22) and (23).'' after ''paragraph (21).''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(i) OTHER PRIOR STATE ACTIONS.—Subsections (b) and (c) shall not apply to the standards established by paragraphs (22) and (23) of section 111(d) in the case of any electric utility in a State if, before the date of enactment of this subsection—

"(I) the State has implemented for the electric utility the standard concerned (or a comparable standard);

"(II) the State regulatory authority for the State or the relevant nonregulated electric utility has conducted a proceeding to consider implementation of the standard concerned (or a comparable standard) for the electric utility; or

"(III) the State legislature has voted on the implementation of the standard concerned (or a comparable standard) for the electric utility during the 3-year period ending on that date of enactment.".

(2) PRIOR AND PENDING PROCEEDINGS.—Section 124 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2634) is amended by inserting "In the case of each standard established by paragraphs (22) and (23) of section 111(d), the reference contained in this section to the date of enactment of this Act shall be deemed to be a reference

to the date of enactment of such paragraphs (22) and (23).'' after ''paragraph (21).''.

SEC. 604. TRUE COSTS AND VALUE OF ENERGY FOR ECONOMIC AND PUBLIC BENEFIT.

(a) ENERGY PRODUCTIVITY ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) BASELINE ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy, in consultation with the Task Force established under subsection (c) of this Act, shall publish a comprehensive baseline assessment of energy productivity in the United States, which shall, at a minimum—

(A) define a framework and methodology for measuring energy productivity as the relationship between energy inputs and the economic or societal value of the work performed by those inputs, at the national, regional, and sectoral levels;

(B) evaluate current energy productivity performance at the national, regional, and sectoral levels;

(C) identify barriers to improved energy productivity across economic sectors; and

(D) highlight opportunities for improvement through technology, policy, behavioral, or structural interventions.

(2) PERIODIC NATIONAL ENERGY PRODUCTIVITY REPORTING.—Not later than 6 months after the publication of the baseline assessment under paragraph (1), and at least quarterly thereafter, the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration shall publish a report on energy productivity in the United States using the same measures of economic output in each sector and nationally as those used in the estimates of labor productivity published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Administrator of the Energy Information Administration shall coordinate with the Secretary of Labor on such energy productivity reports so the publication of such energy productivity reports is on the same timeline as the reporting of labor productivity by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(3) NATIONAL ENERGY PRODUCTIVITY MODELING.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and every three years thereafter, the Secretary of Energy shall produce a comprehensive National Energy Productivity Assessment

using existing Federal modeling tools and data systems. The assessment shall—

(A) quantify the direct and indirect economic, environmental, health, and societal impacts of achieving accelerated energy productivity improvements, relative to a business-as-usual scenario, at the national, regional, and sectoral levels;

(B) analyze potential policy pathways to enhance competitiveness, reduce energy costs, increase resilience, and support job creation;

(C) evaluate how such improvements affect national and regional well-being, including reductions in pollution, energy costs, public health burdens, water use, and economic vulnerability;

(D) evaluate risks associated with delayed action, including stranded asset exposure and competitiveness losses; and

(E) include, as appropriate, recommendations for Federal policies, programs, and research priorities to support sustained energy productivity gains.

(4) REPORTS ON ENERGY PRODUCTIVITY AND COMPETITIVENESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of

Energy shall submit to Congress a report detailing how improvements in energy productivity in the United States affects United States competitiveness in key economic sectors, including manufacturing, services, and energy-intensive industries. The report shall include modeling scenarios, investment implications, and policy options to maximize national economic benefits from improved energy productivity.

(b) IMPROVING ENERGY INDICATORS.—

(1) STANDARDIZED REPORTING ON ENERGY INDICATORS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Task Force established under subsection (c) of this Act shall develop standardized methodologies for collecting, evaluating, assembling, analyzing, and disseminating data and other information on the following indicators:

(i) National energy potential, where the term ''national energy potential'' means the theoretical maximum amount of energy physically present within a country's geographic boundary, including the country's Exclusive Economic Zone, across all energy forms, including—

(I) energy stocks for—

(aa) oil and gas, in units of chemical energy, which includes—

(AA) proven reserves as determined by the Energy Information Administration;

(BB) probable reserves as determined by the Energy Information Administration;

(CC) undiscovered technically recoverable resources as determined by the United States Geological Survey; and

(DD) undiscovered unrecoverable resources as determined by the United States Geological Survey;

(bb) coal, in units of chemical energy, which includes identified and undiscovered resources, as determined by the United States Geological Survey; and (cc) nuclear fuel, in units of fissionable energy from reasonably assured, estimated additional, and speculative uranium and thorium resources, as determined by the Energy Information Administration; and

(II) energy flows for—

(aa) solar energy, in units of annual total Global Horizontal Irradiance;

(bb) wind energy, in units of annual kinetic energy from wind at hub heights and atmospheric conditions consistent with commercial wind energy applications, as determined by the Department of Energy;

(cc) hydropower energy, in units of annual gravitational potential energy from inland water flows that, at a minimum, could power a micro hydropower plant, as determined by the Department of Energy;

(dd) geothermal energy, in units of annual subsurface thermal energy at a subsurface depth of 10 kilometers or less, or under temperature, pressure, and geological conditions suitable for energy extraction, as determined by the Department of Energy;

(ee) biomass-based energy, in units of annual chemical energy, including primary resources, and secondary and tertiary residues, as determined by the Department of Energy; and

(ff) marine energy, in units of annual mechanical, thermal, and chemical potential energy in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the United States.

(ii) Technically-accessible energy potential, where the term ''technically-accessible energy potential'' means the theoretical maximum amount of national energy potential that can be accessed and converted into usable energy using existing commercially-available technologies and industry-standard practices, without regard to cost or policy.

(iii) Cost-qualified energy potential, where the term ‘‘cost-qualified energy potential’’ means the theoretical maximum amount of technically-accessible energy potential that could be profitably developed and delivered as usable energy under current or anticipated near-term economic conditions, as determined using prevailing market prices, technology costs, and industry-standard practices, considering existing ordinances and regulations and current industry practices for siting for energy stocks and energy flows.

(iv) Market-viable energy potential, where the term ‘‘market-viable energy potential’’ means the amount of cost-qualified energy potential that is already online or likely to be developed and brought online in practice, at the time of reporting in subsection (b)(1)(B)(ii).

(v) Secondary energy, where the term ‘‘secondary energy’’—

(I) means the amount of energy resources that have been converted into intermediate carriers electricity generation;

(II) represents energy forms that can be stored, transported, distributed, or further converted before final consumption; and

(III) includes, but is not limited to, electricity, refined fuels (such as refined petroleum products, hydrogen, or synthetic fuels), and district heat.

(vi) Final energy, where the term ‘‘final energy’’—

(I) means the amount of secondary energy in the form delivered for end-use consumption for consumption in buildings, transportation, industrial processes, or other sectors or applications; and

(II) includes, but is not limited to, electricity, refined fuels (such as refined petroleum products, hydrogen, or synthetic fuels), and district heat.

(vii) Useful energy, where the term "useful energy"—

(I) means the amount of final energy that is effectively converted into the desired service or output after accounting for energy losses during end-use conversion; and

(II) includes lighting, mechanical work and motion, heating and cooling, chemical process energy, and any other end-use services delivered to meet a desired function.

(viii) Exergy, where term "exergy" means the amount of usable energy and resulting work obtainable from a system or energy stream, accounting for both the quantity and quality of energy.

(ix) Exergy efficiency, where the term "exergy efficiency" means the extent to which the exergy is preserved and converted into valuable economic or societal services during their use for a given system, sector, or economy.

(B) INCORPORATION OF NEW INDICATORS IN DEPARTMENT REPORTING.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the initial development of the standardized methodologies under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Energy shall, as part the Department of Energy's modeling frameworks, scenario analysis tools, and energy outlooks, collect, evaluate, assemble, analyze, and disseminate data and other information related to the indicators listed in clauses (i) through (ix) of subparagraph (A).

(ii) COVERED REPORTING.—The modeling frameworks, scenario analysis tools, and energy outlooks described in clause (i) include—

(I) the Annual Energy Outlook;

(II) to the maximum extent possible—

(aa) the Monthly Energy Review;

(bb) the International Energy Outlook;

(cc) the State Energy Data System; and

(dd) the Short-Term Energy Outlook; and

(III) any successor model or analysis to a model or analysis described in subclauses (I) and (II).

(C) TRANSPARENCY AND DOCUMENTATION.—The Administrator of the Energy Information Administration shall publish and maintain detailed documentation on how the Task Force developed the methodologies under subparagraph (A).

(2) STUDY ON PRIMARY ENERGY INDICATORS.—

(A) REQUIRED STUDY.—The Secretary of Energy, with support from the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, relevant offices within the Department of Energy, and the Task Force, shall conduct a comprehensive study on the validity, limitations, and potential alternatives to the use of the indicators for primary energy in national energy accounting.

(B) SCOPE OF STUDY.—The study shall include—

(i) an evaluation of the conceptual basis and historical rationale for the current indicator for primary energy calculated and reported by the Energy Information Administration;

(ii) an assessment of the limitations of primary energy accounting in accurately reflecting energy efficiency, energy transitions, and the value and comparability of combustible and non-combustible energy sources;

(iii) an analysis of alternative indicators, including secondary energy, final energy, useful energy, and exergy, and their suitability for integration into national energy statistics;

(iv) a review of international best practices for energy accounting, including methodologies used by the International Energy Agency and peer nations; and

(v) recommendations for improvements or replacements to the primary energy indicator that better align with national goals for energy efficiency, electrification, decarbonization, and economic productivity.

(C) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing the findings and recommendations of the study required under subparagraph (A).

(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF ENERGY PRODUCTIVITY AND COST TASK FORCE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall establish an advisory group, to be known as the ''Energy Productivity and Value Task Force'' (in this Act referred to as the ''Task Force''), which shall be led by the Secretary of Energy.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The following heads of Federal agencies shall serve as members of the Task Force:

(i) The Secretary of Energy.

(ii) The Secretary of Commerce.

(iii) The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(iv) The Administrator of the Energy Information Administration.

(v) The Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(vi) The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(vii) The Director of the United States Geological Survey.

(viii) The Assistant Secretary for Health of the Department of Health and Human Services.

(ix) The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

(B) INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL EXPERTS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy, in consultation with the other heads of Federal agencies listed in subparagraph (A), shall appoint independent technical experts as members of the Task Force, which shall consist of independent technical experts with a demonstrated expertise in—

(I) environmental and energy economics;

(II) energy technologies, including renewables, fossil fuel systems, bioenergy, and energy storage;

(III) public health and environmental epidemiology;

(IV) ecology and ecosystem services;

(V) industrial engineering and lifecycle assessment; and

(VI) any other field the Oversight Board determines relevant for the purposes of this Act.

(ii) NUMBER OF EXPERTS.—Under subparagraph (A), the Secretary of Energy shall appoint—

(I) at least 1 independent technical expert for each field under subclauses (I) through (VI) of such subparagraph; and

(II) separate independent technical experts for each such field.

(C) STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATIVES.—The Secretary of Energy, in consultation with the other heads of Federal agencies listed in subparagraph (A), shall appoint stakeholders as members of the Task Force, which shall consist of at least 1, but not more than two, stakeholders that represent each of—

(i) the electric power sector;

(ii) the renewable energy sector;

(iii) the non-renewable energy sector;

(iv) consumer advocacy groups;

(v) energy-intensive industries;

(vi) environmental and public interest advocacy organizations;

(vii) the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine;

(viii) academic- and National Laboratory-based researchers with expertise in—

(I) energy and economics;

(II) climate and economics; or

(III) environmental systems and economics; and

(ix) any other sectors or organizations the Secretary of Energy determines relevant for the purposes of this Act.

(3) TERMINATION.—Notwithstanding section 1013 of title 5, United States Code, the Task Force shall terminate on the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this section.

(d) LIFECYCLE IMPACT AND COSTS OF ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES.—

(1) COMPREHENSIVE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND DATASET.—The Secretary of Energy shall develop and maintain a comprehensive analytical framework and dataset based on the methodology and guiding principles submitted to the Secretary of Energy by the Task Force under paragraph (3).

(2) ASSESSMENT OF LIFECYCLE IMPACTS AND COSTS.—

(A) DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE.—The Secretary of Energy shall use the comprehensive analytical framework and dataset developed and maintained under subsection (a) to prepare an assessment of the full lifecycle impacts and costs of producing and delivering energy services from each major energy resource or technology, including impacts and costs from upstream, operational, and downstream stages from extraction to end-use and waste management.

(B) SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT.—The assessment prepared under paragraph (1) shall include, for each major energy resource or technology, a complete quantification and characterization of the lifecycle impacts associated with producing and delivering energy services using the resource or technology, including, impacts from—

(i) energy inputs and losses, from extraction through end use and waste management, including embodied energy;

(ii) material use, including chemical use, and waste generation;

(iii) water use, including withdrawals, consumption, quality impacts, and other risks to water availability, quality, and ecosystem function;

(iv) pollution and emissions, including emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants, water pollutants, and land disturbance; and

(v) indirect and direct costs to social, environmental, and economic well-being resulting from such impacts.

(C) USES OF ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary of Energy shall use the assessment prepared under paragraph (1)—

(i) to develop strategic planning, investment prioritization, policies and programs, and regulatory analysis to limit the social, environmental, and economic costs of energy production and use;

(ii) to inform the allocation of grants and making loans and loan guarantees for Federal energy research, development, State and local programs, and demonstrations; and

(iii) as a resource for future reports and analyses of energy productivity, recognizing the link between resource impacts and social, economic, and environmental well-being.

(D) UPDATES AND AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary of Energy shall—

(i) update the assessment at regular intervals, but not less frequently than once every 3 years;

(ii) make the results of the assessment publicly available in a transparent, machine-readable format, including documentation of assumptions, data sources, and methodologies used; and

(iii) publish a report describing the lifecycle social, economic, and environmental impacts and costs of producing and delivering energy services from each major renewable or nonrenewable energy resource or technology.

(3) TASK FORCE METHODOLOGY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 12 months after the date on which the Task Force is established, the Task Force shall submit to the Secretary of Energy a methodology and guiding principles for the analytical framework and dataset developed and maintained by the Secretary of Energy under paragraph (2), including definitions, the scope of the analytical framework and dataset, data sources, and procedures for periodic review, validation, and updates to such methodology and guiding principles.

(B) RECONVENING TASK FORCE FOR REVIEW, VALIDATION, AND UPDATES.—If the Secretary of Energy determines that the methodology and guiding principles submitted to the Secretary of Energy under subparagraph (A) are no longer suitable or otherwise require revision, including in response to new data, advances in analytical methods, or changes in statutory or regulatory requirements, the Secretary of Energy may reconvene the Task Force for the sole purpose of submitting to the Secretary of Energy an updated methodology and guiding principles by not later than 90 days after the date on which the Task Force is reconvened. Any reconvened Task Force shall terminate on the earlier of the date on which it submits the updated methodology and guiding principles to the Secretary or the date that is 90 days after the date on which it is reconvened.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ENERGY PRODUCTIVITY.—The term "energy productivity" means a measure of how efficiently an economy, region, or industry uses energy to generate economic value.

(2) MAJOR ENERGY RESOURCE OR TECHNOLOGY.—The term "major energy resource or technology"—

(A) means an energy resource, carrier, or technology and any associated systems for producing, converting, storing, transmitting, or delivering energy services that contribute significantly to the national energy supply, demand, or infrastructure and materially affect energy system performance, emissions, or economic outcomes; and

(B) includes—

(i) fossil fuels (including coal, petroleum, and natural gas);

(ii) nuclear energy;

(iii) renewable energy (including solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, marine, and biomass);

(iv) hydrogen and other chemical energy carriers and associated systems;

(v) energy storage technologies; and

(vi) any other energy resources, carriers, or technologies that the Secretary determines may materially affect the performance, emissions, resilience, reliability, or economic outcomes of the national energy system.

SEC. 605. GRID PERFORMANCE DISCLOSURE.

(a) ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION SCORECARD ELEMENTS AND VERIFICATION.—

(1) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) COVERED TRANSMISSION OWNER SCORECARDS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall require each covered transmission owner to annually develop, publish, and submit to the Commission and the Secretary a report, to be known as a transmission owner scorecard, that includes metrics that are standardized as required under paragraph (2) and evaluate the following:

(I) Ratepayer affordability, which shall assess the cost of transmission services per unit of energy transmitted or other metrics that can be used to assess affordability of energy provided to ratepayers.

(II) Financing costs, which shall assess the financing structure and cost of capital for a covered transmission owner, and may include consideration of capital structure and leverage ratios, reliance on formula rates or other automatic adjustment mechanisms, allowed and earned returns on equity, the cost of debt and preferred stock, the presence and magnitude of incentive rate adders, and other related metrics.

(III) Investment prudency and cost recovery, which shall assess the prudency of capital investments and the transparency and structure of associated cost recovery mechanisms, and may include the frequency and magnitude of cost disallowances in rate proceedings, the types of facilities or investments associated with disallowed costs, the degree of cost recovery from ratepayers relative to shareholder contributions, and the transparency and accountability of cost allocation frameworks.

(IV) Investment effectiveness, which shall assess the value delivered by covered transmission owner investments relative to their costs, including how effectively the covered transmission owner considered and deployed the most economically efficient solutions to reduce cost burden on ratepayers and the accuracy of project cost estimates, and may include metrics such as benefit-cost ratios, investments in advanced technology deployment, non-wires alternatives, advanced transmission technologies, or other operational upgrades that avoid higher cost capital investment, estimated and actual cost for new or updated assets, and other indicators of prudent capital deployment.

(V) Capital expenditure tilt, which shall assess the covered transmission owner's balance of spending on capital investment versus operational and maintenance activities.

(VI) System reliability and availability, which shall assess the operational performance of the transmission facilities of the covered transmission owner over the reporting year, including information related to outages, equipment availability, and resilience to system disturbances, and may be expressed using existing transmission-specific reliability indicators, as described by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation or other entity established to oversee and administer reliability standards and procedures for the bulk-power system, metrics regarding the economic costs of outages or lost reliability, or other related metrics.

(VII) Physical system performance, which shall assess how effectively the transmission facilities owned, operated, or controlled by the covered transmission owner are used to deliver electricity, including both physical and economic performance, and may include technical and non-technical losses, utilization relative to rated capacity and design constraints, age of system components, and other indicators of transmission system utilization, performance, and efficiency.

(VIII)(aa) Interconnection and access fairness, which shall assess the extent to which the interconnection process for interregional interconnections and new facilities (including generators, energy storage, load, and merchant transmission projects) is conducted in a timely and impartial manner consistent with Commission regulations, including comparisons between affiliated entities and unaffiliated entities, and may be expressed as the difference in the number of days from initial interconnection request to execution of an Interconnection Agreement, or through related measures of procedural equity.

(bb) For purposes of this subclause:

(AA) The term ‘‘affiliated entity’’ means any entity that has a direct or indirect relationship with a covered transmission owner or its parent entity that could reasonably influence interconnection treatment, including an entity that shares common ownership or controlling interest with the covered transmission owner or its parent entity; is a direct or indirect subsidiary of the covered transmission owner or its parent entity; is engaged in a joint venture, contractual partnership, or strategic alliance with the covered transmission owner or its parent entity, where such partnership includes shared financial interest, revenue sharing, or asset co-development; or is otherwise determined by the Commission to have a financial, governance, or operational relationship that may reasonably be expected to influence interconnection prioritization.

(BB) The term ''unaffiliated entity'' means any entity that has logged an interconnection request with the covered transmission owner and is not an affiliated entity.

(IX) Non-operational cost recovery, which shall assess the amount of covered transmission owner spending on lobbying, advertising, penalties, and advocacy activities recovered through customer rates, and may be expressed as a total sum of expenditures on such activities, or related metrics.

(X) Interregional and regional planning integration, which shall assess the extent to which the covered transmission owner participates in coordinated regional and interregional transmission planning processes and infrastructure development, and may be expressed as the number and capacity of interregional transmission ties, the share of projects subject to regional or interregional planning review, or related metrics.

(XI) Co-location and reuse of rights-of-way, which shall report the percentage of new circuit-miles placed in service that are—

(aa) sited within the existing corridor of linear infrastructure, including transmission, pipeline, rail, and highway infrastructure; and

(bb) reconductored or right-sized on existing structures.

(XII) Any additional matters that may be evaluated using outcome-based performance metrics the Commission determines necessary to improve transparency, affordability, reliability, equity, or environmental performance of the facilities owned, operated, or controlled by the covered transmission owner.

(ii) EXEMPTIONS.—The Commission may, by rule, exempt any category of covered transmission owners from the requirement to include a metric described in clause (i) if the Commission determines that the metric is inapplicable to the covered transmission owners in the category.

(iii) COORDINATION.—In preparing and developing a transmission owner scorecard pursuant to this subparagraph, a covered transmission owner shall coordinate, as necessary to obtain or estimate data required to be included in a scorecard under this subsection, with any relevant entity, including—

(I) regional grid operators, including Independent System Operators, Regional Transmission Organizations, transmission planning entities, and balancing authorities;

(II) interconnected electric utilities, including load serving entities and other transmission providers;

(III) owners of generation facilities, including utility-scale and merchant generators seeking interconnection or operating within the service territory of the covered transmission owner; and

(IV) regulatory and oversight entities, including State public utility commissions, and applicable Federal or State energy, reliability, or environmental agencies.

(B) REGIONAL TRANSMISSION SCORECARDS.—The Commission shall require each Independent System Operator, Regional Transmission Organization, and transmission planning entity to annually develop, publish, and submit to the Commission and the Secretary a report, to be known as a regional transmission scorecard, that uses metrics that are standardized as required under paragraph (2) and includes the following:

(i) Aggregation of the metrics reported for the year in the transmission owner scorecards of the covered transmission owners within the jurisdiction of the applicable ISO, RTO, or transmission planning entity, which shall consist of a summary of such metrics that—

(I) reflects weighted or capacity-adjusted averages of covered transmission owner-reported metrics, as appropriate; and

(II) highlights significant intra-regional variation or performance outliers.

(ii) Regional-specific metrics, which shall consist of reporting on metrics specific to operational responsibilities of the ISO, RTO, or transmission planning entity, including the following:

(I) Market efficiency, which shall assess the extent to which the ISO, RTO, or transmission planning entity is successful in operating efficient wholesale electricity markets, minimizing system congestion, and maximizing the use of existing grid infrastructure to deliver cost-effective outcomes for consumers, and may be expressed as average energy and ancillary service costs (system-wide and by major zone), system and zonal capacity costs where applicable, congestion costs, out-of-market payments, frequency of redispatch, implementation of congestion-relieving technologies, or related metrics.

(II) Regional interconnection performance, which shall assess the effectiveness and efficiency of interconnection processes, and may include metrics that measure the duration of queue processing, the rate of project withdrawals, and the share of projects that successfully reach commercial operation, or related metrics.

(III) Regional and interregional development, which shall assess the extent and effectiveness of regional and interregional transmission planning and buildout, and may be expressed in relation to the number and total capacity of transmission lines developed through regional and interregional planning processes, the proportion of new transmission projects selected through regional planning processes versus those advanced outside of such processes (including local or supplemental projects), the number of projects selected through competitive processes, the use and outcomes of benefit-cost analysis in project selection and development, the frequency of stakeholder engagement, the ratio of total investment in interregional and regional transmission to investment in local transmission, or other related metrics.

(IV) Greenhouse gas emissions intensity, which shall assess the emissions profile of electricity delivered within the service territory of the ISO, RTO, or transmission planning entity in the reporting year, and may be expressed as the emissions intensity of delivered electricity in carbon dioxide equivalents per megawatt-hour, or related metrics.

(V) Any additional outcome-based performance metrics the Commission determines necessary to improve transparency, affordability, reliability, equity, or environmental performance of the transmission system overseen by the RTO, ISO, or transmission planning entity.

(C) DATA DISCLOSURE.—Each reporting entity shall publish and submit to the Secretary, with each scorecard published under this paragraph, all non-confidential underlying data supporting the metrics included in the scorecard, in a machine-readable, open-data format.

(D) INITIAL REPORTING.—Each reporting entity shall publish and submit to the Secretary its first annual scorecard not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) METRIC AND METHODOLOGY STANDARDIZATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission, with input from the Secretary, the Administrator, the National

Laboratories, and other stakeholders shall issue guidance that, where appropriate, standardizes the metrics required to be included in a scorecard under paragraph (1) and the methodologies for calculating such metrics.

(3) VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall establish a process by which scorecards required to be developed under paragraph (1) are verified by independent evaluators to ensure accuracy, consistency, and credibility prior to publication under such paragraph. The Commission shall include in such process—

(i) requirements for the approval by the Commission of independent evaluators, including requirements that an independent evaluator—

(I) possess demonstrated expertise in electric transmission planning, data validation, engineering analysis, or grid performance evaluation; and

(II) be independent from the entity being verified and have no financial, contractual, or governance conflicts of interest;

(ii) procedures for auditing the assumptions and methodologies used in applying performance metrics, including to detect selective reporting and ensure alignment with Commission-defined protocols;

(iii) requirements to ensure that no single independent evaluator, or their parent company or subsidiary, may evaluate a reporting entity more than 4 years in a row, and not more than 7 times in any 10-year period;

(iv) requirements under which an independent evaluator approved by the Commission may verify the information in the scorecard of the reporting entity, by reviewing supporting documentation, conducting project inspections, and applying standardized evaluation, measurement, and verification protocols for the metrics included in the scorecard;

(v) requirements for public disclosure of the results of such verification, including any adjustments to reported values, methodologies used in the verification process, and justifications for material discrepancies; and

(vi) a process for reviewing and refining verification protocols at regular intervals, in consultation with any relevant stakeholder advisory group convened under subsection (c), to incorporate advances in data analytics, energy system modeling, and grid performance assessment.

(B) ROLE OF NATIONAL LABORATORIES.—In carrying out this paragraph, the Commission shall—

(i) collaborate with National Laboratories that have the necessary expertise, in coordination with the Secretary, to design and publish standardized verification protocols, including templates, analytical tools, and calibration datasets;

(ii) utilize the technical expertise of National Laboratories to assist in the training, evaluation, or approval of independent evaluators;

(iii) engage National Laboratories in conducting selective audits or quality assurance reviews of verified scorecards during initial implementation of the scorecard reporting and verification process and implementation of any subsequent updates to such scorecards; and

(iv) consult National Laboratories during periodic updates to the verification process, in coordination with any relevant stakeholder advisory group convened under subsection (c).

(4) INDEPENDENT AUDITS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission, in consultation with the Secretary, shall designate National Laboratories with necessary expertise, or other qualified institutions, to conduct independent audits of scorecards published under paragraph (1) on a periodic or as-needed basis to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and integrity of reported data, methodologies, and performance metrics.

(B) INITIATION.—An audit under this paragraph may be initiated—

(i) at the discretion of the Secretary;

(ii) upon identification of material discrepancies in reported metrics;

(iii) in response to concerns raised by a stakeholder advisory group convened under subsection (c); or

(iv) as part of a randomized, rotating sample of reporting entities to support continuous oversight.

(C) RESULTS.—The results of an audit conducted under this paragraph shall be made publicly available not later than 2 months after completion of the audit.

(5) RULEMAKING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue a final rule to carry out this subsection.

(B) DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY SUPPORT.—Upon request by the Commission, the Secretary shall provide technical assistance, subject-matter expertise, and access to relevant data and tools to the Commission in developing the rule required to be published under this paragraph.

(C) INCLUSIONS.—The Commission shall include in the rule issued under this paragraph—

(i) requirements to ensure timely and consistent reporting, which may include requirements for data-sharing agreements, protocols for data access, and other mechanisms as necessary to facilitate the completion of scorecards;

(ii) allowance for the use of reasonable proxies, estimates, or approximations based on best available data and transparent methodologies where direct data is unavailable; and

(iii) requirements that all reported metrics reflect a good-faith effort to provide reasonably accurate representations of transmission facility and system performance, subject to Commission review and oversight.

(D) REVISIONS.—In issuing any revisions to the rule under this subsection, the Commission shall ensure that—

(i) such revisions are based on the outcomes of any applicable technical conference held under subsection (c);

(ii) the period for public comment on such revisions is not less than 90 days; and

(iii) the final rulemaking such revisions is issued not later than 180 days after the close of such period for public comment.

(6) ENFORCEMENT.—With respect to any Independent System Operator, Regional Transmission Organization, or covered transmission owner subject to the requirements of part II of the Federal Power Act that is required to publish a scorecard under paragraph (1), a violation of a requirement of this subsection shall be considered a violation of a provision of such part II for purposes of section 316A of such Act (16 U.S.C. 825o–1).

(7) REPORT.—The Secretary shall annually publish a report that compiles and analyzes scorecards submitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1) and, for each metric—

(A) ranks the performance of reporting entities, grouped by market type and governance structure; and

(B) explains the metric and describes any changes over time in the affordability, reliability, equity, or environmental performance of the transmission system, as evidenced by changes in the information included by reporting entities in such scorecards with respect to the metric.

(8) SCORECARD REVIEW.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 3 years thereafter, the Secretary, in coordination with the Commission shall conduct a comprehensive review of the implementation of this subsection, including the administration of the subsection, data collection and coordination, reporting entity compliance, stakeholder engagement, and the effectiveness of the information included in scorecards as a policy tool and issue a public report that includes—

(A) an assessment and comparison of the annual changes in utility performance regarding the metrics required to be included in the scorecards;

(B) evaluation of data quality, availability, methodologies, and verification practices relevant to the scorecards; and

(C) findings and recommendations regarding the scorecards provided by the technical conferences held and stakeholder advisory group convened under subsection (c).

(b) ACCESSIBILITY AND PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC-FACING SCORECARD PORTAL.—

(A) INITIATION.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in collaboration with the Commission and the Administrator, shall initiate the establishment of a public, searchable online portal housing scorecards and underlying data submitted to the Secretary under this Act.

(B) PORTAL AVAILABILITY.—Not later than 27 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish and make available a public, searchable online portal housing scorecards and underlying data submitted to the Secretary under this Act.

(2) INCLUSION IN PORTAL.—The Secretary shall make public through the searchable online portal established under this subsection each scorecard, together with the underlying data associated with each scorecard, that is submitted to the Secretary under this Act.

(c) SCORECARD IMPROVEMENT.—

(1) TECHNICAL CONFERENCES.—The Commission shall hold public technical conferences not less

often than once every 3 years to solicit stakeholder feedback on—

(A) the effectiveness of scorecard metrics in conveying the performance of a given reporting entity;

(B) the sufficiency and quality of the data disclosed in scorecards;

(C) the alignment of scorecards with Federal and State priorities, including affordability and reliability of transmitted electricity; and

(D) opportunities to refine metrics in light of emerging technologies, grid conditions, and energy markets.

(2) STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUPS.—For purposes of a rulemaking under subsection (a) and each technical conference held under paragraph (1), the Commission shall convene a stakeholder advisory group to provide advice to the Commission. Each such stakeholder advisory group shall be composed of 17 members, as follows:

(A) 2 members representing State public utility commissions.

(B) 2 members representing covered transmission owners.

(C) 1 member representing independent power producers.

(D) 2 members representing Regional Transmission Organizations.

(E) 2 members representing Independent System Operators.

(F) 2 members representing transmission planning entities that are not Regional Transmission Organizations or Independent System Operators.

(G) 2 members representing ratepayer advocacy organizations.

(H) 2 members with expertise in energy data and grid analytics.

(I) 2 members with expertise in energy systems performance, representing academic or research institutions, including the National Laboratories.

(3) RESPONSE REQUIRED.—Not later than 60 days after receiving any advice from a stakeholder group convened under paragraph (2), the Commission shall respond in writing to such advice.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Energy In-

formation Administration of the Department of Energy.

(2) ADVANCED TRANSMISSION TECHNOLOGY.—The term ‘‘advanced transmission technology’’ means any hardware or software that—

(A) increases the capacity, efficiency, reliability, resilience, or safety of transmission facilities and transmission technologies;

(B) is installed in addition to new or existing transmission facilities and transmission technologies—

(i) to give operators of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more situational awareness and control over the electric grid;

(ii) to make the transmission facilities and transmission technologies more efficient; or

(iii) to increase the transfer capacity of the transmission facilities and transmission technologies; and

(C) includes, but is not limited to, dynamic line ratings, advanced conductors, topology optimization, advanced power-flow controls, and other digital or physical systems that increase the usable transfer capability of the grid.

(3) BULK-POWER SYSTEM.—The term ''bulk-power system'' has the meaning given that term in section 215 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824o).

(4) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(5) COVERED TRANSMISSION OWNER.—The term ''covered transmission owner'' means any entity, other than an Independent System Operator, Regional Transmission Organization, or transmission planning entity, that—

(A) owns, operates, or controls transmission facilities that are part of, or connected to, the bulk-power system;

(B) provides, or is capable of providing, transmission service for the movement of electric energy, whether in interstate or intrastate commerce; and

(C) if the entity owns, operates, or controls transmission facilities that are not part of, or connected to, the bulk-power system, the total transmission capacity under peak demand conditions of all transmission facilities owned, operated, or controlled by the entity is 100 megawatts or greater.

(6) INDEPENDENT SYSTEM OPERATOR; ISO; REGIONAL TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION; RTO; TRANSMITTING UTILITY.—The terms ''Independent System Operator'', ''ISO'', ''Regional Transmission Organization'', ''RTO'', and ''transmitting utility'' have the meanings given those terms in section 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

(7) INTERREGIONAL INTERCONNECTION.—The term ''interregional interconnection'' means a transmission facility or interconnection project that enables the transfer of electric energy between 2 or more transmission planning regions, including connections between any of the Western Interconnection, the Eastern Interconnection, and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas.

(8) REPORTING ENTITY.—The term ''reporting entity'' means an entity required to submit a scorecard under this Act.

(9) SCORECARD.—The term ''scorecard'' means an annual report required to be submitted by a covered transmission owner, Independent System Operator, Regional Transmission Organization, or transmission planning entity pursuant to subsection (a).

(10) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

(11) TRANSMISSION PLANNING ENTITY.—The term ''transmission planning entity'' means an entity, other than a RTO or an ISO, that is responsible for planning for the deployment of electric transmission for a transmission planning region.

(12) TRANSMISSION PLANNING REGION.—The term ''transmission planning region'' means a geographic area determined by the Commission to satisfy the requirements for the scope of regional transmission planning, as established in or in compliance with the following orders issued by the Commission:

(A) ''Transmission Planning and Cost Allocation by Transmission Owning and Operating Public Utilities'' published in the Federal Register on October 24, 2012 (77 Fed. Reg. 64890).

(B) ''Building for the Future Through Electric Regional Transmission Planning and Cost Allocation'' published in the Federal Register on June 11, 2024 (89 Fed. Reg. 49280).

TITLE VII—COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITIES FOR SUCCESSFUL DEPLOYMENT

SEC. 701. FEDERAL PERMITTING CAPACITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To the maximum extent practicable, the head of each agency listed under section 41002(b)(2)(B) of the FAST Act (42 U.S.C. 4370m–1(b)(2)(B)), including the head of any agency invited pursuant to clause (xiv) of such subparagraph (B), shall maintain adequate personnel capacity and expertise to process authorizations and environmental documents for projects in a timely manner, including in compliance with sections 107(g) and 112(a)(4) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336a(g) and 4336f(a)(4)).

(b) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, the head of each agency described in subsection (a) shall submit to the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Committee on Natural Resources, and the Environment and Public Works Committee a report on the personnel capacity of the agency to process authorizations and environmental documents for projects in a timely manner, which shall include—

(1) the number of employees—broken down by field office—responsible for processing such authorizations and environmental documents as of the date on which the report is submitted;

(2) the number of employees—broken down by field office—responsible for processing such authorizations and environmental documents as of January 1, 2025;

(3) the number of employees—broken down by field office—necessary for the agency to complete environmental documents in compliance with sections 107(g) and 112(a)(4) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336a(g) and 4336f(a)(4));

(4) the capacity of the agency—broken down by field office—to engage with communities affected by projects when preparing environmental documents, including dedicated Tribal consultation capacity, language access services, and designated community engagement personnel as described in section 706;

(5) the adequacy of the training available to employees related to processing such authorizations and environmental documents; and

(6) a finding by the agency whether there are a sufficient number of employees of the agency to

comply with sections 107(g) and 112(a)(4) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336a(g) and 4336f(a)(4)) and engage with communities.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Upon receipt of the report, if an agency finds under subsection (b)(5) that there are an insufficient number of employees—broken down by field office—of the agency to comply with sections 107(g) and 112(a)(4) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336a(g) and 4336f(a)(4)) and engage with communities, or insufficient training opportunities available, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall develop and execute a plan to increase personnel capacity and expertise at the agency.

(d) DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 3304 of title 5, United States Code, and without regard to the provisions of sections 3309 through 3318 of such title 5, if the head of an agency described in subsection (a) issues or renews a certification that there is a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for covered positions to carry out the responsibilities and activities of the agency with respect to processing authorizations and environmental documents for infrastructure projects

in a timely manner, the agency head may, subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), recruit and directly appoint highly qualified individuals into the competitive service.

(2) LIMITATION.—The recruiting and appointment of highly qualified individuals under paragraph (1) shall be consistent with the merit principles of section 2301 of title 5, United States Code, and the agency shall comply with the public notice requirements of section 3327 of such title 5.

(3) TERMINATION.—A certification issued or renewed under this subsection shall terminate on the earlier of—

(A) the date that is 5 years after the certification is issued or renewed; or

(B) the date on which the agency head determines that there is no longer a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for covered positions to carry out the responsibilities and activities of the agency related to permitting.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is authorized to be appropriated such sums as is necessary to conduct more efficient, accurate, and timely reviews for planning, permitting and approval processes through the hiring and training of personnel, and the purchase of technical and scientific services and new equipment, and to improve agency transparency, accountability, and public engagement.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The term ‘‘authorization’’ means any license, permit, approval, finding, determination, or other administrative decision issued by an agency and any interagency consultation that is required or authorized under Federal law in order to site, construct, reconstruct, or commence operations of an infrastructure project.

(2) COVERED POSITION.—The term ‘‘covered position’’ means a position in which an employee is responsible for conducting work of a scientific, technical, engineering, mathematical, legal, or otherwise highly specialized or skilled nature related to processing authorizations and environmental documents for infrastructure projects in a timely manner.

(3) ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT.—The term ‘‘environmental document’’ has the meaning given such term in section 111 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336e).

SEC. 702. INTERAGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL DATA SYSTEM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF DATA STANDARDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, in consultation with the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council, the Chief Information Officers Council, the Office of Management and Budget, and other relevant stakeholders and Federal agencies, shall develop, publish, and iteratively update data standards for the collection and curation of authorization data by Federal agencies, which shall be used to—

(A) assist with environmental reviews and authorizations;

(B) organize, define, and standardize various concepts, formats, and protocols that are included in environmental reviews and authorizations; and

(C) reduce the need for redundant environmental reviews by creating a shared vocabulary and software systems that will support vendor neutrality, data interoperability, workflow automation, and automatic data exchange between Federal agencies.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The data standards developed, published, and iteratively updated under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A standardized taxonomy that allows Federal agencies to identify and track data types, relationships, and values.

(B) Comprehensive categories for data, such as—

(i) projects;

(ii) processes;

(iii) environmental documents;

(iv) public comments;

(v) geospatial information;

(vi) public engagement events, as applicable by process or Federal agency;

(vii) case events; and

(viii) milestones to ensure clarity and uniformity.

(b) DEVELOPMENT OF PROTOTYPE TOOLS.—The Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council, the Chief Information Officers Council, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and other relevant stakeholders and Federal agencies, shall design, test, and build prototype tools for environmental reviews and authorizations that will assist Federal agencies in implementing the minimum functional requirements described in subsection (c). The Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality shall prioritize designing, testing, and building tools under this subsection that—

(1) support authorization case or project management systems that manage tasks, milestones, and activities associated with environmental reviews and authorizations, and provide Federal agencies more data and insight into such reviews and authorizations;

(2) enable—

(A) application submission and tracking portals used by project sponsors, enabling greater transparency; and

(B) public comment opportunity tracking portals to increase transparency;

(3) facilitate automated applications, environmental reviews, and authorizations;

(4) allow data exchange between Federal agency systems; and

(5) accelerate complex environmental reviews.

(c) PUBLICATION OF GUIDANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF DATA STANDARDS AND MINIMUM FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality shall publish guidance for how each Federal agency responsible for environmental reviews or authorizations implements—

(A) the data standards published under subsection (a); and

(B) the following minimum functional requirements:

(i) Application data sharing that enables automated transfer of relevant environmental review and authorization data among Federal agencies.

(ii) Automated project screening to assist frontline staff with reviewing project sponsor provided information for completeness and accuracy and determining if a categorical exclusion or other general authorization applies to an action. Automated project screening may not be used by the Council on Environmental Quality or a

Federal agency to unlawfully restrict any activities on Federal lands.

(iii) Public availability of screening criteria and related decision models.

(iv) Automated case or project management tools which include a repository of relevant data and metadata that enable advanced tracking, reporting, and optimization to aid workflows.

(v) Integrated geographic information system analysis tools which incorporate geospatial data layers and models for each resource analyzed as part of an environmental review or authorization for a given study area.

(vi) Document management tools that preserve metadata associated with geospatial analysis, modeling, and other analytic processes conducted during an environmental review or authorization, to support future reviews and enable Artificial Intelligence-assisted analysis of past decisions.

(vii) Automated comment compilation and analysis tools, including services for comment categorization and response that handle the lifecycle of comment submission, analysis, categorization and response with Artificial Intelligence support where appropriate.

(viii) Administrative record management tools that maintain both portable document formats and data-rich repositories accessible to both machine and human users.

(ix) Common or interoperable Federal agency services that integrate shared services, shared applications, and common user experiences for Federal agency staff, project sponsors, and the public.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The guidance published under this subsection shall include the following:

(A) Guidelines for cloud-based storage, data sharing protocols, and application programming interfaces to enable the Council on Environmental Quality to work with Federal agencies to use authorization data to aid Federal agencies in modernizing their environmental reviews and authorizations and for iterative development of the authorization portal.

(B) Provisions that support scalability and adaptability of the minimum requirements to emerging technologies.

(d) IMPLEMENTATION OF DATA STANDARDS AND MINIMUM FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—The head of each Federal agency responsible for environmental reviews or authorizations shall—

(A) not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section—

(i) compare existing Federal agency systems for environmental reviews and authorizations under their authority with the data standards published under subsection (a) and the minimum functional requirements described in subsection (c)(1)(B) and report findings from such comparison to the Council on Environmental Quality;

(ii) assess whether existing Federal agency technological capabilities are consistent with the data standards published under subsection (a) and the minimum functional requirements described in subsection (c)(1)(B);

(iii) submit to the Council on Environmental Quality a report that estimates the completion dates for implementing the data standards published under subsection (a) and the minimum functional requirements described in subsection (c)(1)(B); and

(iv) submit to the Council on Environmental Quality, in consultation with the Council on Environmental Quality, an implementation plan that—

(I) describes how the Federal agency will implement the data standards published under subsection (a) and the minimum functional requirements described in subsection (c)(1)(B); and

(II) describes how, to the extent the Federal agency determines necessary to meet relevant statutory requirements, the Federal agency will adopt or implement the prototype tools tested, designed, and built under subsection (b); and

(B) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, begin implementing the data standards published under subsection (a) and the minimum functional requirements described in subsection (c)(1)(B).

(2) REPORT.—Not less frequently than twice each year, the Chief Information Officer of each Federal agency, in consultation with the Chief Environmental Review and Permitting Officer of each Federal agency, shall submit to the Council on Environmental Quality and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget a report on the progress of the Federal agency towards meeting the requirements of paragraph (1).

(e) UNIFIED INTERAGENCY DATA SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) UNIFIED INTERAGENCY DATA SYSTEM.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Chair of the Council of Environmental Quality and the head of each Federal agency responsible for environmental reviews or authorizations shall iteratively develop and maintain a unified interagency data system consisting of interconnected Federal agency systems and shared services for environmental reviews and authorizations.

(B) AUTHORIZATION PORTAL.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The shared services developed and maintained under subparagraph (A) shall include a common interactive, digital, cloud-based authorization portal, which shall—

(I) be designed in a manner consistent with—

(aa) the recommendations of the Council on Environmental Quality included in the study submitted pursuant to section 110 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336d) entitled ''Council on Environmental Quality Report to Congress on the Potential for Online and Digital Technologies to Address Delays in Reviews and Improve Public Accessibility and Transparency under 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)''; and (bb) the minimum functional requirements described in subsection (c)(1)(B);

(II) serve as a platform for tracking and displaying real-time data on environmental reviews and authorizations made available through application programming interfaces or other reporting mechanisms from Federal agency systems that are compliant with the data standards and data architecture described in this section;

(III) be supported by a decentralized, cross-network digital infrastructure software that ensures vendor neutrality and interoperability of data and models across Federal agencies;

(IV) include a mechanism for the dissemination of relevant information (such as a notice of intent for public comment, public meetings, project statuses, or a notice of intent to begin an environmental review) to local communities, as applicable;

(V) allow a project sponsor to submit all necessary documentation for environmental reviews and authorizations in 1 unified and secure portal;

(VI) support interactive, digital, and cloud-based tools enabling applicants to edit documents and collaborate with relevant Federal agencies in real time;

(VII) support visual features, including video, animation, geographic information system displays, interactive maps, and three-dimensional renderings;

(VIII) provide for the exchange of information to and from Federal agency data systems via an application programming interface or another reporting mechanisms;

(IX) allow for the submission of geospatial data associated with project location, footprint, and impact;

(X) support automatic documentation of submission and process timelines; and

(XI) allow the following metrics to be tracked over time—

(aa) estimates of achieved efficiencies, such as reductions in the time between receipt of applications and final authorization decisions;

(bb) comparisons of authorization timelines before and after the implementation of this section;

(cc) usage of the authorization portal and other statistics from the Digital Analytics Program;

(dd) metrics on the number of public comments received, responses provided, and community meetings held;

(ee) the number of projects subject to litigation based on authorization deficiencies or inefficiencies;

(ff) a list of Federal agencies that are not yet fully compliant with the data standards published under subsection (a) and the minimum functional requirements described in subsection (c)(1)(B), along with their progress toward compliance; and

(gg) examples or repositories of Federal agency-developed digital workflows enabled by the implementation of this section, including visualizations of data sharing, authorizations and decision logic, and environmental reviews.

(ii) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—The Administrator of General Services shall host the authorization portal as a shared service for Congress, Federal agencies, and the public.

(iii) ACCESSABILITY.—The authorization portal shall be accessible to Congress, Federal agencies, and the public, with appropriate safeguards to protect sensitive or classified information and information restricted by user type as appropriate.

(iv) PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY.—To the extent practicable and consistent with other law, the authorization portal shall provide public access to non-sensitive data, including authorization timelines, location, project type, environmental reviews, and mitigation measures.

(v) CONGRESSIONAL ACCESS AND OVERSIGHT.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—The authorization portal shall provide Congress with direct access to aggregated performance data and other analytics to enable real-time oversight of Federal agencies.

(II) ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND TRAINING MATERIALS.—Congress shall have access to the data, fine-tuning procedures, and prompt configurations specifically created or adapted for Artificial Intelligence systems used to support environmental review or authorization activities, excluding proprietary or general pretraining materials unrelated to such agency-specific customization.

(III) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Council on Environmental Quality shall provide to Congress technical assistance upon request to ensure effective use of the authorization portal and Artificial Intelligence systems for oversight purposes.

(C) CYBERSECURITY AND COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS.—The authorization portal shall be designed to promote vendor neutral interoperability, reduce redundancy, and ensure compliance and coordination with other laws, including—

(i) section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Privacy Act of 1974), and subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code;

(ii) the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program established under section 3608 of title 44, United States Code; and

(iii) the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency of the Department of Homeland Security, for a case in which the project is in coordination with a Federal agency with stringent security requirements.

(2) DEADLINES.—

(A) SHARED SERVICES PILOT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Council on Environmental Quality shall oversee piloting of shared services for environmental reviews and authorizations, including the authorization portal under paragraph (1)(B).

(B) UNIFIED SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.—To the maximum extent practicable, not later than December 1, 2027, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality shall develop and implement the unified interagency data system required under paragraph (1)(A).

(3) REPORT.—Not less frequently than annually, the Chair of the Council on Environmental

Quality, in consultation with the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council, the Chief Information Officers Council, and other relevant stakeholders and Federal agencies, shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate a report on the Council on Environmental Quality's progress on developing a unified interagency data system under paragraph (1).

(f) AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Council on Environmental Quality may enter into contracts and other arrangements for analyses, services, and products with Federal agencies, private organizations, and businesses, and make such payments as determined necessary by the Council on Environmental Quality to carry out the provisions of this section.

(g) CLARIFYING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize the Council on Environmental Quality or a Federal agency to impose additional regulatory processes or requirements beyond those expressly stipulated under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) or any other law.

(h) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—To the extent that a data system, technology, or tool developed or incorporated into a unified interagency data system under this section is not limited by project type, the data system, technology, or tool shall not have its use be restricted by project type.

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The term ''authorization'' means any license, permit, approval, finding, determination, or other administrative decision issued by an agency and any interagency consultation that is required or authorized under Federal law in order to site, construct, reconstruct, or commence operations of a project administered by a Federal agency.

(2) AUTHORIZATION DATA.—The term ''authorization data'' means—

(A) any data relevant for a Federal agency to—

(i) determine the effect on the environment of an action for which an authorization is required by the Federal agency; and

(ii) determine whether to issue such authorization; and

(B) any community input or public comment on such determinations.

(3) DATA ARCHITECTURE.—The term ''data architecture'' means the design and organization of data systems, including frameworks for data storage, processing, and exchange.

(4) DATA STANDARDS.—The term ''data standards'' means agreed-upon specifications for data formats, structures, and definitions to ensure consistency and vendor neutral interoperability.

(5) ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.—The term ''environmental review'' means any Federal agency procedures or processes for—

(A) applying a categorical exclusion; or

(B) preparing an environmental assessment, an environmental impact statement, or another document required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(6) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term ''Federal agency'' has the meaning given the term ''agency'' in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.

(7) FEDERAL PERMITTING IMPROVEMENT STEERING COUNCIL.—The term ''Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council'' has the meaning

given the term ''Council'' in section 41001 of the FAST Act (42 U.S.C. 4370m).

SEC. 703. TIMELY PUBLIC RELEASE OF NEPA DOCUMENTATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To achieve the goals described in section 1507.4 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), to allow agencies and the public to efficiently and effectively access timely information relating to environmental reviews required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the lead agency for a proposed major Federal action shall make the documents identified under subsection (b) with respect to such proposed major Federal action available to the public in a searchable, digital format when such documents are completed by the lead agency, or in the case of final documents, finalized by the agency. The lead agency shall make such documents available to the public in a searchable, digital format by—

(1) publishing and maintaining such documents on the public website or websites of the applicable agency or agencies; and

(2) uploading such documents to the E–NEPA online permitting portal established under subsection (b) of section 110 of the National Environmental

Policy Act of 1969 (as added by section 702(b) of this Act).

(b) DOCUMENTS.—The documents identified under this subsection are the following:

(1) Any notice of intent and other scoping notices.

(2) Any draft and final environmental assessments and findings of no significant impacts.

(3) Any draft, final, and supplemental environmental impact statements.

(4) Any records of decision.

(5) Any documentation associated with a determination to proceed with the proposed major Federal action under a categorical exclusion.

(6) Any additional related documentation.

(c) TIMING.—The lead agency shall make the documents identified under subsection (b) available to the public in a searchable, digital format under subsection (a) by not later than the earlier of—

(1) 3 days after the date on which the lead agency completes the document; and

(2) 3 days after the date on the document is published in the Federal Register.

(d) COOPERATING AGENCIES.—A cooperating agency shall publish a link to the location on the website of the lead agency to the documents identified under subsection (b) on which the agency was a cooperating agency.

SEC. 704. COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENTS.

(a) PRIORITIZATION IN NEPA.—If a project sponsor has entered into a community benefits agreement described in subsection (b) with respect to an eligible project, the applicable lead agency shall prioritize the completion of the required environmental documents for the eligible project.

(b) COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT (CBA).—A project sponsor and a CBA partner may enter into an agreement that—

(1) relates to an eligible project for which an authorization is sought;

(2) may include the disbursement of funds, including commitments, for social, economic, or environmental benefits that will—

(A) ensure benefits from the construction, modification, and operation of the eligible project are shared with nearby residents;

(B) offset adverse impacts resulting from such construction, modification, or operation; or

(C) address legacy or historical harm or adverse cumulative social, economic, or environmental impacts in the location in which the eligible project is to be carried out;

(3) includes commitments by a project sponsor to hire members of the local workforce during construction, modification, operation, or maintenance of the eligible project;

(4) includes commitments to provide educational opportunities and training for workforce and skills development, if it is determined that there is an insufficient local workforce;

(5) may include commitments by a project sponsor to procure materials and services from local businesses, when possible;

(6) is negotiated through a process that includes meaningful engagement by the project sponsor with the CBA partner;

(7) details specific, measurable, and legally enforceable CBA commitments;

(8) includes a detailed plan, with clear metrics, milestones, and timelines for accomplishing such commitments;

(9) establishes specific roles, responsibilities, and processes for tracking and reporting progress with respect to commitments agreed to in the CBA;

(10) establishes clear enforcement processes to address a failure to fulfill a commitment that was agreed to;

(11) addresses the mechanism through which any disbursement agreed to in the CBA will be held and dispersed, such as through a trust fund or similar instrument; and

(12) if the CBA involves tribal lands or interests—

(A) it must be negotiated on a government-to-government basis, in recognition of trust obligations and tribal sovereignty; and

(B) the CBA may include compensation to a Tribe for legal costs incurred during negotiation (including legal, staffing, and consulting expenses).

(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

(1) Upon request by a CBA partner, the lead agency may provide technical assistance to the CBA partner in developing and negotiating a community benefits agreement.

(2) In providing technical assistance, the agency must utilize technical assistance providers who are neutral, culturally competent, third parties with experience developing CBAs.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The term ''authorization'' means any license, permit, approval, finding, determination, or other administrative decision issued by an agency and any interagency consultation that is required or authorized under Federal law in order to site, construct, reconstruct, or commence operations of an infrastructure project.

(2) CBA PARTNER.—The term ''CBA partner'' means a State, a local unit of government, an Indian Tribe, a labor organization, or a community benefits organization.

(3) COMMUNITY BENEFITS ORGANIZATION.—The term ''community benefits organization'' means an organization that—

(A) is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code; and

(B) is formed to protect the human health and environment of communities in the area in which a proposed the eligible project is to be carried out.

(4) ELIGIBLE PROJECT.—The term ''eligible project'' means a project for the construction, modification, or operation of a clean energy facility.

(5) ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT; LEAD AGENCY.—The terms ''environmental document'' and ''lead agency'' have the meanings given such terms, respectively, in section 111 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336e).

(6) CLEAN ENERGY FACILITY.—The term ''clean energy facility'' means a facility that—

(A) uses wind, solar, or geothermal energy to generate energy;

(B) transmits electricity to support wind, solar, or geothermal energy generation; or

(C) stores energy.

SEC. 705. INTERVENOR FUNDING AT FERC OFFICE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 319(b)(2) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 825q–l(b)(2)) is amended by striking ''The Commission may'' and inserting ''The Commission shall''.

(b) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission shall promulgate a final rule to provide compensation under section 319(b)(2) of the Federal

Power Act (16 U.S.C. 825q–1(b)(2)), as amended by this section. Under such rule the Commission shall require that each intervenor or participant file a disclosure form of earned and unearned income to identify conflicts of interest. Such form shall not be overly burdensome.

SEC. 706. SENIOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICERS AND TRIBAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICERS.

(a) DESIGNATION OF SENIOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICERS AND TRIBAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of each Federal agency required or authorized to complete an environmental document or an authorization for a major Federal action shall designate—

(A) 1 or more appropriate employees or officials of the applicable Federal agency to serve as a senior community engagement officer (referred to in this section as an ''SCO''); and

(B) 1 or more appropriate employees or officials of the applicable Federal agency (other than an employee or official designated as an SCO under subparagraph (A)) to serve as a Tribal community engagement officer (referred to in this section as a ''TEO'').

(2) RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN SCO AND TEO.—An SCO and a TEO shall—

(A) oversee community or Tribal, as applicable, engagement in environmental review and authorization processes carried out by the Federal agency;

(B) advise the applicable head of the Federal agency on matters relating to community or Tribal, as applicable, engagement in such reviews and processes;

(C) identify, recommend, and implement approaches to expand and improve early, meaningful community or Tribal, as applicable, engagement relating to the environmental review and authorization processes carried out by the Federal agency, including to ensure timely public access to all information relevant to inform such engagement;

(D) identify and avoid or resolve conflicts with communities or Indian Tribes affected by the environmental review or authorization processes, as applicable—

(i) to align Federal actions with the needs and interests of those communities or Indian Tribes, as applicable; and

(ii) to minimize the potential for delay of environmental review and authorization processes carried out by the Federal agency;

(E) identify opportunities with affected communities or Indian Tribes to accelerate the environmental review and authorization processes carried out by the Federal agency;

(F) provide technical support and capacity building, on request of a community or an Indian Tribe to enhance the ability of communities and Indian Tribes to engage constructively in Federal agency decision making;

(G) assist in developing and negotiating community benefits agreements consistent with section 704; and

(H) coordinate with the Council on Environmental Quality to develop interagency training modules, data sharing protocols, and community engagement standards to ensure consistency and accountability across Federal agencies.

(3) REPORTING.—An SCO and a TEO shall report directly to a Deputy Secretary (or equivalent)

or higher position in the Federal agency in which the SCO or TEO serves.

(4) GUIDANCE.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall establish any guidance necessary to establish SCO and TEO positions not later than 2 years of the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) REGIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICERS.—A Federal agency may appoint regional community engagement officers to support community and Tribal engagement in environmental review and authorization processes carried out by the Federal agency within a region impacted by a proposed major Federal project, including by carrying out activities—

(1) to identify and implement approaches to expand and improve early, meaningful community and Tribal engagement relating to the environmental review and authorization processes carried out by the Federal agency;

(2) to identify and avoid or resolve conflicts with affected communities and Indian Tribes that have the potential to delay environmental review and authorization processes carried out by the Federal agency;

(3) to identify opportunities with affected communities and Indian Tribes to accelerate the environmental review and authorization processes carried out by the Federal agency;

(4) to provide technical support and capacity building, on request of a community or an Indian Tribe, to enhance the ability of communities or Indian Tribes to engage constructively in Federal agency decision making; and

(5) to assist in developing and negotiating community benefits agreements consistent with section 704.

(c) APPLICATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Federal Advisory Committee Act''), shall not apply to stakeholder engagement processes or public comment activities that are required under or proceeding from a Federal environmental permitting process and led by an SCO, a TEO, or a regional community engagement officer appointed under subsection (b).

(d) FAST 41.—

(1) DEFINITION OF AGENCY SCO.—Section 41001 of the FAST Act (42 U.S.C. 4370m) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (18) as paragraphs (3) through (19), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

"(2) AGENCY SCO.—The term 'agency SCO' means the senior community engagement officer of an agency, as designated by the head of the agency under section 706(a)(1)(A) of the Energy Bills Relief Act.".

(2) DISPUTE RESOLUTION.—Section 41003(c)(2)(C)(i) of the FAST Act (42 U.S.C. 4370m–2(c)(2)(C)(i)) is amended by striking "agency CERPOs" and inserting "agency CERPOs, agency SCOs,".

(3) ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW IMPROVEMENT FUND.—Section 41009(d)(3) of the FAST Act (42 U.S.C. 4370m–8(d)(3)) is amended—

(A) by striking "facilitate timely" and inserting "facilitate early, meaningful community engagement and timely"; and

(B) by inserting "and agency SCOs" after "agency CERPOs".

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—The term ''authorization'' means any license, permit, approval, finding, determination, or other administrative decision issued by an agency and any interagency consultation that is required or authorized under Federal law in order to site, construct, reconstruct, or commence operations of an infrastructure project.

(2) ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT.—The term ''environmental document'' has the meaning given such term in section 111 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336e).

SEC. 707. CAPACITY GRANTS FOR PERMITTING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall make grants to States, units of local government, and Indian Tribes which shall be used for purposes of—

(1) increasing the capacity of such organizations to conduct activities related to proposed major Federal actions, and State, local, and Tribal environmental reviews, permits, and consultations, including by—

(A) compiling data and conducting analyses, planning, and environmental review;

(B) determining potential economic, social, public health, and environmental impacts; or

(C) identifying opportunities to mitigate such impacts;

(2) coordinating with relevant Federal agencies in order to establish shared permitting information portals in association with the linked interagency environmental data collection systems established under section 702 through which project developers can—

(A) acquire all relevant information regarding pertinent Federal, State and local permitting requirements;

(B) submit all required permit applications; and

(C) request and receive assistance in completing relevant permit applications;

(3) identifying and minimizing redundancy between relevant Federal, State and local permitting requirements;

(4) enhancing community engagement opportunities related to environmental reviews;

(5) identifying zones for renewable energy development;

(6) facilitating the siting of renewable energy-related facilities and infrastructure;

(7) establishing local zoning ordinances that promote the development of renewable energy; and

(8) training and hiring personnel, and other activities to increase the capacity of States, units of local government, Indian Tribes, and nonprofit associations, as applicable, to carry out activities described in paragraphs (1) through (7).

(b) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to make grants under subsection (a) $500,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2031.

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