

SEC. 9. IMPROVING THE SHARING OF DATA BETWEEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND STATE MEDICAID PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish a plan to encourage and facilitate the participation of States in the Medicare-Medicaid Data Match Program (commonly referred to as the “Medi-Medi Program”) under section 1893(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ddd(g)).

(b) PROGRAM REVISIONS TO IMPROVE MEDICAID DATA MATCH PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY STATES.—Section 1893(g)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ddd(g)(1)(A)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “or otherwise” after “eligible entities”;

(2) in clause (i)—

(A) by inserting “to review claims data” after “algorithms”; and

(B) by striking “service, time, or patient” and inserting “provider, service, time, or patient”;

(3) in clause (ii)—

(A) by inserting “to investigate and recover amounts with respect to suspect claims” after “appropriate actions”; and

(B) by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(4) in clause (iii), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iv) furthering the Secretary’s design, development, installation, or enhancement of an automated data system architecture—

“(I) to collect, integrate, and assess data for purposes of program integrity, program oversight, and administration, including the Medi-Medi Program; and

“(II) that improves the coordination of requests for data from States.”.

(c) PROVIDING STATES WITH DATA ON IMPROPER PAYMENTS MADE FOR ITEMS OR SERVICES PROVIDED TO DUAL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and implement a plan that allows each State agency responsible for administering a State plan for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act access to relevant data on improper or fraudulent payments made under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) for health care items or services provided to dual eligible individuals.

(2) DUAL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term “dual eligible individual” means an individual who is entitled to, or enrolled for, benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395c et seq.), or enrolled for benefits under part B of title XVIII of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395j et seq.), and is eligible for medical assistance under a State plan under title XIX of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) or under a waiver of such plan.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MICROBEAD-FREE WATERS ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1321, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1321) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the manufacture and introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of rinse-off cosmetics containing intentionally-added plastic microbeads.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, across the country, many State and local governments, including counties in New York, have moved to ban products that contain plastic microbeads.

Because of their leadership and because of the advocacy from scientists and others who have shown us the damage that microbeads can do, Congress came together to unanimously ban plastic microbeads from rinse-off cosmetic products.

This is a great bill, and it shows that we can pass smart environmental legislation here in Washington.

Plastic microbeads are the tiny pieces of plastic that we often see in toothpaste, hand lotion, or various other personal care products.

When we brush our teeth and wash our face, most of us don’t consider these acts to be harmful in any way.

But plastic microbeads are smaller than 5 millimeters in size, which means they are too small to be captured by the filtration systems in our water treatment centers.

So these plastic microbeads end up leaching into our lakes, our rivers, our streams, our bays, and even our drinking water supplies.

It might be surprising that a piece of plastic so small can cause such outsized damage.

But we have heard from a wide range of constituents and business groups that all recognize the damage, and all recommended that Congress act to remove plastic microbeads from the marketplace.

We have heard it from the fishing industry, from the tourism industry, from the culinary industry. Even the cosmetics industry is supportive of this ban. Many cosmetics companies have already voluntarily stopped using microbeads themselves.

When tiny plastic microbeads get into the water, they attract pollutants that are already in the water, and they concentrate these pollutants to potentially dangerous levels.

Fish don’t know what microbeads are, so they eat them and end up ingesting all of the pollutants stuck on the microbeads.

This disrupts the food chain, it contaminates huge portions of the wildlife population, and it hurts our commercial and recreational fishing industries, because they can’t sell—and we can’t eat—fish that are filled with toxic plastic.

Many of our counties, cities, and States took the lead on this issue, and they should be commended for that.

But local action isn’t enough to solve a nationwide problem like this—not when so many communities in different States are connected by the same bodies of water—because no one is immune when our waterways are contaminated.

Congress had a responsibility to act—to stop the flow of microbeads into our waterways.

And today we are doing our job in passing this Federal ban on these products.

The Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015 will prohibit the manufacture of rinse-off cosmetic products containing plastic microbeads starting in 2017 and will ensure that they are off retail shelves by 2018.

And while this bill preempts States from regulating rinse-off products containing plastic microbeads differently from the Federal ban, individual States will still have the ability to restrict microbeads in other types of products.

Additionally, the preemption language in this bill restricts their manufacture and distribution in interstate commerce and should not prevent States or local governments from regulating how microbeads are disposed of under laws such as the Clean Water Act.

States can also co-enforce the Federal ban by enacting identical laws.

This is a great bipartisan bill. And it is a smart step forward, as we look for new ways to protect our environment.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 1321) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIFY AFRICA ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 291, S. 2152.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2152) to establish a comprehensive United States Government policy to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to develop an appropriate mix of power solutions, including renewable energy, for more broadly distributed electricity access in order to support poverty reduction, promote development outcomes, and drive economic growth, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with amendments.

(Omit the parts in boldface brackets and insert the parts printed in italic.)

S. 2152

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Electrify Africa Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to improve access to affordable and reliable electricity in Africa in order to unlock the potential for *inclusive* economic growth, job creation, food security, improved health, education, and environmental outcomes, and poverty reduction.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to partner, consult, and coordinate with the governments of sub-Saharan African countries, international financial institutions, and African regional economic communities, cooperatives, and the private sector, in a concerted effort to—

(1) promote first-time access to power and power services for at least 50,000,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa by 2020 in both urban and rural areas;

(2) encourage the installation of at least 20,000 additional megawatts of electrical power in sub-Saharan Africa by 2020 using a broad mix of energy options to help reduce poverty, promote sustainable development, and drive *inclusive* economic growth;

(3) promote *non-discriminatory* reliable, affordable, and sustainable power in urban areas (including small urban areas) to promote economic growth and job creation;

(4) promote policies to facilitate public-private partnerships to provide *non-discriminatory* reliable, sustainable, and affordable electrical service to rural and underserved populations;

(5) encourage the necessary in-country reforms, including facilitating public-private partnerships specifically to support electricity access projects to make such expansion of power access possible;

(6) promote reforms of power production, delivery, and pricing, as well as regulatory reforms and transparency, to support long-term, market-based power generation and distribution;

(7) promote policies to displace kerosene lighting with other technologies; and

(8) promote an all-of-the-above energy development strategy for sub-Saharan Africa that includes the use of oil, natural gas, coal, hydroelectric, wind, solar, and geothermal power, and other sources of energy.

SEC. 4. DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE, MULTIYEAR STRATEGY.

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish a comprehensive, integrated, multiyear strategy to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to implement national power strategies and develop an appropriate mix of power solutions to provide access to sufficient reliable, affordable, and sustainable power in order to reduce poverty and drive economic growth and job creation consistent with the policy stated in section 3.

(2) FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS.—The President shall ensure that the strategy required under paragraph (1) maintains sufficient flexibility for and remains responsive to *concerns and interests of affected local communities* and technological innovation in the power sector.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that contains the strategy required under subsection (a) and includes a discussion of the following elements:

(1) The objectives of the strategy and the criteria for determining the success of the strategy.

(2) A general description of efforts in sub-Saharan Africa to—

(A) increase power production;

(B) strengthen electrical transmission and distribution infrastructure;

(C) provide for regulatory reform and transparent and accountable governance and oversight;

(D) improve the reliability of power;

(E) maintain the affordability of power;

(F) maximize the financial sustainability of the power sector; and

(G) improve [access to power] *non-discriminatory access to power that is done in consultation with affected communities*.

(3) A description of plans to support efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to increase access to power in urban and rural areas, including a description of plans designed to address commercial, industrial, and residential needs.

(4) A description of plans to support efforts to reduce waste and corruption, *ensure local community consultation*, and improve existing power generation through the use of a broad power mix, including fossil fuel and renewable energy, distributed generation models, energy efficiency, and other technological innovations, as appropriate.

(5) An analysis of existing mechanisms for ensuring, and recommendations to promote—

(A) commercial cost recovery;

(B) commercialization of electric service through distribution service providers, including cooperatives, to consumers;

(C) improvements in revenue cycle management, power pricing, and fees assessed for service contracts and connections;

(D) reductions in technical losses and commercial losses; and

(E) *non-discriminatory* access to power, including recommendations on the creation of new service provider models that mobilize community participation in the provision of power services.

(6) A description of the reforms being undertaken or planned by countries in sub-Saharan Africa to ensure the long-term economic viability of power projects and to increase access to power, including—

(A) reforms designed to allow third parties to connect power generation to the grid;

(B) policies to ensure there is a viable and independent utility regulator;

(C) strategies to ensure utilities become or remain creditworthy;

(D) regulations that permit the participation of independent power producers and private-public partnerships;

(E) policies that encourage private sector and cooperative investment in power generation;

(F) policies that ensure compensation for power provided to the electrical grid by on-site producers;

(G) policies to unbundle power services;

(H) regulations to eliminate conflicts of interest in the utility sector;

(I) efforts to develop standardized power purchase agreements and other contracts to streamline project development; [and]

(J) efforts to negotiate and monitor compliance with power purchase agreements and other contracts entered into with the private [sector.] sector; and

(K) policies that promote local community consultation with respect to the development of power generation and transmission projects.

(7) A description of plans to ensure meaningful local consultation, as appropriate, in the planning, long-term maintenance, and management of investments designed to increase access to power in sub-Saharan Africa.

(8) A description of the mechanisms to be established for—

(A) selection of partner countries for focused engagement on the power sector;

(B) monitoring and evaluating increased access to, and reliability and affordability of, power in sub-Saharan Africa;

(C) maximizing the financial sustainability of power generation, transmission, and distribution in sub-Saharan Africa;

(D) establishing metrics to demonstrate progress on meeting goals relating to access to power, power generation, and distribution in sub-Saharan Africa; and

(E) terminating unsuccessful programs.

(9) A description of how the President intends to promote trade in electrical equipment with countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including a description of how the government of each country receiving assistance pursuant to the strategy—

(A) plans to lower or eliminate import tariffs or other taxes for energy and other power production and distribution technologies destined for sub-Saharan Africa, including equipment used to provide energy access, including solar lanterns, solar home systems, and micro and mini grids; and

(B) plans to protect the intellectual property of companies designing and manufacturing products that can be used to provide energy access in sub-Saharan Africa.

(10) A description of how the President intends to encourage the growth of distributed renewable energy markets in sub-Saharan Africa, including off-grid lighting and power, that includes—

(A) an analysis of the state of distributed renewable energy in sub-Saharan Africa;

(B) a description of market barriers to the deployment of distributed renewable energy technologies both on- and off-grid in sub-Saharan Africa;

(C) an analysis of the efficacy of efforts by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the United States Agency for International Development to facilitate the financing of the importation, distribution, sale, leasing, or marketing of distributed renewable energy technologies; and

(D) a description of how bolstering distributed renewable energy can enhance the overall effort to increase power access in sub-Saharan Africa.

(11) A description of plans to ensure that small and medium enterprises based in sub-Saharan Africa can fairly compete for energy development and energy access opportunities associated with this Act.

(c) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may, as appropriate, establish an Interagency Working Group to coordinate the activities of relevant United States Government departments and agencies involved in carrying out the strategy required under this section.

(2) FUNCTIONS.—The Interagency Working Group may, among other things—

(A) seek to coordinate the activities of the United States Government departments and agencies involved in implementing the strategy required under this section;

(B) ensure efficient and effective coordination between participating departments and agencies; and

(C) facilitate information sharing, and coordinate partnerships between the United States Government, the private sector, and other development partners to achieve the goals of the strategy.

SEC. 5. PRIORITIZATION OF EFFORTS AND ASSISTANCE FOR POWER PROJECTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA BY KEY UNITED STATES INSTITUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In pursuing the policy goals described in section 3, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, the Director of the

Trade and Development Agency, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation should, as appropriate, prioritize and expedite institutional efforts and assistance to facilitate the involvement of such institutions in power projects and markets, both on- and off-grid, in sub-Saharan Africa and partner with other investors and local institutions in sub-Saharan Africa, including private sector actors, to specifically increase access to reliable, affordable, and sustainable power in sub-Saharan Africa, including through—

(1) maximizing the number of people with new access to power and power services;

(2) improving and expanding the generation, transmission and distribution of power;

(3) providing reliable power to people and businesses in urban and rural communities;

(4) addressing the energy needs of *marginalized* people living in areas where there is little or no access to a power grid and developing plans to systematically increase coverage in rural areas;

(5) reducing transmission and distribution losses and improving end-use efficiency and demand-side management;

(6) reducing energy-related impediments to business productivity and investment; and

(7) building the capacity of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to monitor and appropriately and transparently regulate the power sector and encourage private investment in power production and distribution.

(b) **EFFECTIVENESS MEASUREMENT.**—In prioritizing and expediting institutional efforts and assistance pursuant to this section, as appropriate, such institutions shall use clear, accountable, and metric-based targets to measure the effectiveness of such guarantees and assistance in achieving the goals described in section 3.

(c) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize modifying or limiting the portfolio of the institutions covered by subsection (a) in other developing regions.

SEC. 6. LEVERAGING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.

In implementing the strategy described in section 4, the President should direct the United States representatives to appropriate international bodies to use the influence of the United States, consistent with the broad development goals of the United States, to advocate that each such body—

(1) commit to significantly increase efforts to promote investment in well-designed power sector and electrification projects in sub-Saharan Africa that increase energy access, in partnership with the private sector and consistent with the host countries' absorptive capacity;

(2) address energy needs of individuals and communities where access to an electricity grid is impractical or cost-prohibitive;

(3) enhance coordination with the private sector in sub-Saharan Africa to increase access to electricity;

(4) provide technical assistance to the regulatory authorities of sub-Saharan African governments to remove unnecessary barriers to investment in otherwise commercially viable projects; and

(5) utilize clear, accountable, and metric-based targets to measure the effectiveness of such projects.

SEC. 7. PROGRESS REPORT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report on progress made toward achieving the strategy described in section 4 that includes the following:

(1) A report on United States programs supporting implementation of policy and legislative changes leading to increased power generation and access in sub-Saharan Africa, including a description of the number, type, and status of policy, regulatory, and legislative changes initiated or implemented as a result of programs funded or supported by the United States in countries in sub-Saharan Africa to support increased power generation and access after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) A description of power projects receiving United States Government support and how such projects, including off-grid efforts, are intended to achieve the strategy described in section 4.

(3) For each project described in paragraph (2)—

(A) a description of how the project fits into, or encourages modifications of, the national energy plan of the country in which the project will be carried out, including encouraging regulatory reform in that country;

(B) an estimate of the total cost of the project to the consumer, the country in which the project will be carried out, and other investors;

(C) the amount of financing provided or guaranteed by the United States Government for the project;

(D) an estimate of United States Government resources for the project, itemized by funding source, including from the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of the Treasury, and other appropriate United States Government departments and agencies;

(E) an estimate of the number and *regional locations* of individuals, communities, businesses, schools, and health facilities that have gained power connections as a result of the project, with a description of how the reliability, affordability, and sustainability of power has been improved as of the date of the report;

(F) an assessment of the increase in the number of people and businesses with access to power, and in the operating electrical power capacity in megawatts as a result of the project between the date of the enactment of this Act and the date of the report;

(G) a description of efforts to gain meaningful local consultation for projects associated with this Act and any significant estimated noneconomic effects of the efforts carried out pursuant to this Act; and

(H) a description of the participation by small and medium enterprises based in sub-Saharan Africa on projects associated with this Act.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendments be agreed to; the Corker amendment at the desk be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendments were agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2939) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

On page 3, line 21, strike “technologies; and” and insert “technologies;”.

On page 4, line 2, strike “energy.” and insert the following: “energy; and

(9) promote and increase the use of private financing and seek ways to remove barriers to private financing and assistance for projects, including through charitable organizations.

On page 10, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

(12) A description of how United States investments to increase access to energy in sub-Saharan Africa may reduce the need for foreign aid and development assistance in the future.

(13) A description of policies or regulations, both domestically and internationally, that create barriers to private financing of the projects undertaken in this Act.

(14) A description of the specific national security benefits to the United States that will be derived from increased energy access in sub-Saharan Africa.

On page 13, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

(c) **PROMOTION OF USE OF PRIVATE FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE.**—In carrying out policies under this section, such institutions shall promote the use of private financing and assistance and seek ways to remove barriers to private financing for projects and programs under this Act, including through charitable organizations.

On page 13, line 9, strike “(c)” and insert “(d)”.

The bill (S. 2152), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2152

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Electrify Africa Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to improve access to affordable and reliable electricity in Africa in order to unlock the potential for inclusive economic growth, job creation, food security, improved health, education, and environmental outcomes, and poverty reduction.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to partner, consult, and coordinate with the governments of sub-Saharan African countries, international financial institutions, and African regional economic communities, cooperatives, and the private sector, in a concerted effort to—

(1) promote first-time access to power and power services for at least 50,000,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa by 2020 in both urban and rural areas;

(2) encourage the installation of at least 20,000 additional megawatts of electrical power in sub-Saharan Africa by 2020 using a broad mix of energy options to help reduce poverty, promote sustainable development, and drive inclusive economic growth;

(3) promote non-discriminatory reliable, affordable, and sustainable power in urban areas (including small urban areas) to promote economic growth and job creation;

(4) promote policies to facilitate public-private partnerships to provide non-discriminatory reliable, sustainable, and affordable electrical service to rural and underserved populations;

(5) encourage the necessary in-country reforms, including facilitating public-private partnerships specifically to support electricity access projects to make such expansion of power access possible;

(6) promote reforms of power production, delivery, and pricing, as well as regulatory reforms and transparency, to support long-term, market-based power generation and distribution;

(7) promote policies to displace kerosene lighting with other technologies;

(8) promote an all-of-the-above energy development strategy for sub-Saharan Africa that includes the use of oil, natural gas, coal, hydroelectric, wind, solar, and geothermal power, and other sources of energy; and

(9) promote and increase the use of private financing and seek ways to remove barriers to private financing and assistance for projects, including through charitable organizations.

SEC. 4. DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE, MULTIYEAR STRATEGY.

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish a comprehensive, integrated, multiyear strategy to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to implement national power strategies and develop an appropriate mix of power solutions to provide access to sufficient reliable, affordable, and sustainable power in order to reduce poverty and drive economic growth and job creation consistent with the policy stated in section 3.

(2) FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS.—The President shall ensure that the strategy required under paragraph (1) maintains sufficient flexibility for and remains responsive to concerns and interests of affected local communities and technological innovation in the power sector.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that contains the strategy required under subsection (a) and includes a discussion of the following elements:

(1) The objectives of the strategy and the criteria for determining the success of the strategy.

(2) A general description of efforts in sub-Saharan Africa to—

(A) increase power production;

(B) strengthen electrical transmission and distribution infrastructure;

(C) provide for regulatory reform and transparent and accountable governance and oversight;

(D) improve the reliability of power;

(E) maintain the affordability of power;

(F) maximize the financial sustainability of the power sector; and

(G) improve non-discriminatory access to power that is done in consultation with affected communities.

(3) A description of plans to support efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to increase access to power in urban and rural areas, including a description of plans designed to address commercial, industrial, and residential needs.

(4) A description of plans to support efforts to reduce waste and corruption, ensure local community consultation, and improve existing power generation through the use of a broad power mix, including fossil fuel and renewable energy, distributed generation models, energy efficiency, and other technological innovations, as appropriate.

(5) An analysis of existing mechanisms for ensuring, and recommendations to promote—

(A) commercial cost recovery;

(B) commercialization of electric service through distribution service providers, including cooperatives, to consumers;

(C) improvements in revenue cycle management, power pricing, and fees assessed for service contracts and connections;

(D) reductions in technical losses and commercial losses; and

(E) non-discriminatory access to power, including recommendations on the creation of new service provider models that mobilize

community participation in the provision of power services.

(6) A description of the reforms being undertaken or planned by countries in sub-Saharan Africa to ensure the long-term economic viability of power projects and to increase access to power, including—

(A) reforms designed to allow third parties to connect power generation to the grid;

(B) policies to ensure there is a viable and independent utility regulator;

(C) strategies to ensure utilities become or remain creditworthy;

(D) regulations that permit the participation of independent power producers and private-public partnerships;

(E) policies that encourage private sector and cooperative investment in power generation;

(F) policies that ensure compensation for power provided to the electrical grid by on-site producers;

(G) policies to unbundle power services;

(H) regulations to eliminate conflicts of interest in the utility sector;

(I) efforts to develop standardized power purchase agreements and other contracts to streamline project development;

(J) efforts to negotiate and monitor compliance with power purchase agreements and other contracts entered into with the private sector; and

(K) policies that promote local community consultation with respect to the development of power generation and transmission projects.

(7) A description of plans to ensure meaningful local consultation, as appropriate, in the planning, long-term maintenance, and management of investments designed to increase access to power in sub-Saharan Africa.

(8) A description of the mechanisms to be established for—

(A) selection of partner countries for focused engagement on the power sector;

(B) monitoring and evaluating increased access to, and reliability and affordability of, power in sub-Saharan Africa;

(C) maximizing the financial sustainability of power generation, transmission, and distribution in sub-Saharan Africa;

(D) establishing metrics to demonstrate progress on meeting goals relating to access to power, power generation, and distribution in sub-Saharan Africa; and

(E) terminating unsuccessful programs.

(9) A description of how the President intends to promote trade in electrical equipment with countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including a description of how the government of each country receiving assistance pursuant to the strategy—

(A) plans to lower or eliminate import tariffs or other taxes for energy and other power production and distribution technologies destined for sub-Saharan Africa, including equipment used to provide energy access, including solar lanterns, solar home systems, and micro and mini grids; and

(B) plans to protect the intellectual property of companies designing and manufacturing products that can be used to provide energy access in sub-Saharan Africa.

(10) A description of how the President intends to encourage the growth of distributed renewable energy markets in sub-Saharan Africa, including off-grid lighting and power, that includes—

(A) an analysis of the state of distributed renewable energy in sub-Saharan Africa;

(B) a description of market barriers to the deployment of distributed renewable energy technologies both on- and off-grid in sub-Saharan Africa;

(C) an analysis of the efficacy of efforts by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the United States Agency for Inter-

national Development to facilitate the financing of the importation, distribution, sale, leasing, or marketing of distributed renewable energy technologies; and

(D) a description of how bolstering distributed renewable energy can enhance the overall effort to increase power access in sub-Saharan Africa.

(11) A description of plans to ensure that small and medium enterprises based in sub-Saharan Africa can fairly compete for energy development and energy access opportunities associated with this Act.

(12) A description of how United States investments to increase access to energy in sub-Saharan Africa may reduce the need for foreign aid and development assistance in the future.

(13) A description of policies or regulations, both domestically and internationally, that create barriers to private financing of the projects undertaken in this Act.

(14) A description of the specific national security benefits to the United States that will be derived from increased energy access in sub-Saharan Africa.

(c) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may, as appropriate, establish an Interagency Working Group to coordinate the activities of relevant United States Government departments and agencies involved in carrying out the strategy required under this section.

(2) FUNCTIONS.—The Interagency Working Group may, among other things—

(A) seek to coordinate the activities of the United States Government departments and agencies involved in implementing the strategy required under this section;

(B) ensure efficient and effective coordination between participating departments and agencies; and

(C) facilitate information sharing, and coordinate partnerships between the United States Government, the private sector, and other development partners to achieve the goals of the strategy.

SEC. 5. PRIORITIZATION OF EFFORTS AND ASSISTANCE FOR POWER PROJECTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA BY KEY UNITED STATES INSTITUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In pursuing the policy goals described in section 3, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, the Director of the Trade and Development Agency, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation should, as appropriate, prioritize and expedite institutional efforts and assistance to facilitate the involvement of such institutions in power projects and markets, both on- and off-grid, in sub-Saharan Africa and partner with other investors and local institutions in sub-Saharan Africa, including private sector actors, to specifically increase access to reliable, affordable, and sustainable power in sub-Saharan Africa, including through—

(1) maximizing the number of people with new access to power and power services;

(2) improving and expanding the generation, transmission and distribution of power;

(3) providing reliable power to people and businesses in urban and rural communities;

(4) addressing the energy needs of marginalized people living in areas where there is little or no access to a power grid and developing plans to systematically increase coverage in rural areas;

(5) reducing transmission and distribution losses and improving end-use efficiency and demand-side management;

(6) reducing energy-related impediments to business productivity and investment; and

(7) building the capacity of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to monitor and appropriately and transparently regulate the power sector and encourage private investment in power production and distribution.

(b) **EFFECTIVENESS MEASUREMENT.**—In prioritizing and expediting institutional efforts and assistance pursuant to this section, as appropriate, such institutions shall use clear, accountable, and metric-based targets to measure the effectiveness of such guarantees and assistance in achieving the goals described in section 3.

(c) **PROMOTION OF USE OF PRIVATE FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE.**—In carrying out policies under this section, such institutions shall promote the use of private financing and assistance and seek ways to remove barriers to private financing for projects and programs under this Act, including through charitable organizations.

(d) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize modifying or limiting the portfolio of the institutions covered by subsection (a) in other developing regions.

SEC. 6. LEVERAGING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.

In implementing the strategy described in section 4, the President should direct the United States representatives to appropriate international bodies to use the influence of the United States, consistent with the broad development goals of the United States, to advocate that each such body—

(1) commit to significantly increase efforts to promote investment in well-designed power sector and electrification projects in sub-Saharan Africa that increase energy access, in partnership with the private sector and consistent with the host countries' absorptive capacity;

(2) address energy needs of individuals and communities where access to an electricity grid is impractical or cost-prohibitive;

(3) enhance coordination with the private sector in sub-Saharan Africa to increase access to electricity;

(4) provide technical assistance to the regulatory authorities of sub-Saharan African governments to remove unnecessary barriers to investment in otherwise commercially viable projects; and

(5) utilize clear, accountable, and metric-based targets to measure the effectiveness of such projects.

SEC. 7. PROGRESS REPORT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report on progress made toward achieving the strategy described in section 4 that includes the following:

(1) A report on United States programs supporting implementation of policy and legislative changes leading to increased power generation and access in sub-Saharan Africa, including a description of the number, type, and status of policy, regulatory, and legislative changes initiated or implemented as a result of programs funded or supported by the United States in countries in sub-Saharan Africa to support increased power generation and access after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) A description of power projects receiving United States Government support and how such projects, including off-grid efforts, are intended to achieve the strategy described in section 4.

(3) For each project described in paragraph (2)—

(A) a description of how the project fits into, or encourages modifications of, the national energy plan of the country in which

the project will be carried out, including encouraging regulatory reform in that country;

(B) an estimate of the total cost of the project to the consumer, the country in which the project will be carried out, and other investors;

(C) the amount of financing provided or guaranteed by the United States Government for the project;

(D) an estimate of United States Government resources for the project, itemized by funding source, including from the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of the Treasury, and other appropriate United States Government departments and agencies;

(E) an estimate of the number and regional locations of individuals, communities, businesses, schools, and health facilities that have gained power connections as a result of the project, with a description of how the reliability, affordability, and sustainability of power has been improved as of the date of the report;

(F) an assessment of the increase in the number of people and businesses with access to power, and in the operating electrical power capacity in megawatts as a result of the project between the date of the enactment of this Act and the date of the report;

(G) a description of efforts to gain meaningful local consultation for projects associated with this Act and any significant estimated noneconomic effects of the efforts carried out pursuant to this Act; and

(H) a description of the participation by small and medium enterprises based in sub-Saharan Africa on projects associated with this Act.

CONGRATULATING TOWSON UNIVERSITY ON THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE UNIVERSITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 338, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 338) congratulating Towson University on the 150th anniversary of the founding of the university.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table without no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 338) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA COLLEGE OF LAW FOR 150 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Sen-

ate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 339, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 339) congratulating the University of Iowa College of Law for 150 years of outstanding service to the State of Iowa, the United States, and the world.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for their commendation of the 150th anniversary of the University of Iowa College of Law. This makes it the first law school west of the Mississippi to reach that milestone.

In the past 150 years, the college of law has served the people of Iowa, the Nation, and the world, and I am pleased, along with my colleague Senator ERNST, that the resolution congratulates the college of law on its accomplishments.

I have been honored to attend some of the events celebrating Iowa Law this past year, and the law school should be proud of its vast history of achievement. It is the oldest law school west of the Mississippi River, and it has produced generations of attorneys who have been dedicated to improving and enhancing the practice of law in Iowa and throughout the Nation. Currently, Iowa Law has over 10,000 living alumnae who practice in Iowa and around the world.

Iowa was the first State to admit a woman to the practice of law. Iowa Law followed this tradition when in 1873 it graduated what is believed to be the first female law student in the United States, Mary Hickey. Iowa Law's second female law student, Mary Haddock, was the first woman admitted to the practice of law before the district and circuit courts of the United States.

Iowa Law was one of the first law schools to grant a degree to an African-American student when Alexander Clark, Jr., graduated in 1879—decades before other law schools allowed the enrollment of non-White students. Iowa Law has always been at the forefront of the legal field, particularly when it comes to diversity.

Iowa Law has consistently ranked as one of the top 10 public law schools in the country and is currently ranked the 22nd best law school in the Nation.

Throughout the years, Iowa Law has maintained its commitment to the legal community and encourages students to participate in a variety of programs that better Iowa. For example, Iowa Law recently partnered with the Iowa State Bar Association to start a program that trains and recruits law students to work in rural and smalltown practices, providing better access to legal services in these communities. Iowa Law offers several clinic programs that focus on helping the