

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

STREAMLINING ENERGY EFFICIENCY FOR SCHOOLS ACT OF 2019

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 762) to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide for the dissemination of information regarding available Federal programs relating to energy efficiency projects for schools, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 762

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 “Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. COORDINATION OF ENERGY RETROFITTING ASSISTANCE FOR SCHOOLS.

Section 392 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6371a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) COORDINATION OF ENERGY RETROFITTING ASSISTANCE FOR SCHOOLS.—

“(1) DEFINITION OF SCHOOL.—Notwithstanding section 391(6), for the purposes of this subsection, the term ‘school’ means—

“(A) an elementary school or secondary school (as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801));

“(B) an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(a)));

“(C) a school of the defense dependents’ education system under the Defense Dependents’ Education Act of 1978 (20 U.S.C. 921 et seq.) or established under section 2164 of title 10, United States Code;

“(D) a school operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

“(E) a tribally controlled school (as defined in section 5212 of the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988 (25 U.S.C. 2511)); and

“(F) a Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b))).

“(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF CLEARINGHOUSE.—The Secretary, acting through the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, shall establish a clearinghouse to disseminate information regarding available Federal programs and financing mechanisms that may be used to help initiate, develop, and finance energy efficiency, distributed generation, and energy retrofitting projects for schools.

“(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out paragraph (2), the Secretary shall—

“(A) consult with appropriate Federal agencies to develop a list of Federal programs and financing mechanisms that are, or may be, used for the purposes described in paragraph (2); and

“(B) coordinate with appropriate Federal agencies to develop a collaborative edu-

cation and outreach effort to streamline communications and promote available Federal programs and financing mechanisms described in subparagraph (A), which may include the development and maintenance of a single online resource that includes contact information for relevant technical assistance in the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy that States, local education agencies, and schools may use to effectively access and use such Federal programs and financing mechanisms.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 762.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to voice my strong support for H.R. 762 introduced by my good friend and colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

This legislation will provide a coordinating structure for our Nation’s schools to help them better navigate available Federal programs and financing options.

Across our great country, K–12 school districts spend literally billions of dollars on their energy bills each year, while an estimated 14 million American children attend deteriorating public schools. By upgrading these systems, we can increase efficiency and focus school funding to achieve better educational outcomes.

We have a huge opportunity this Congress to make major investments in our Nation’s infrastructure—including our most essential institutions, such as schools.

I believe efficiency has to be our fuel of first choice. We can save local taxpayers money while upgrading and modernizing these facilities.

This legislation has passed the House in each of the last two Congresses with broad bipartisan support, and I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this year’s iteration.

I commend Representative CARTWRIGHT and the bill’s bipartisan cosponsors for their efforts, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I want to consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, H.R. 762, was introduced by Representative CARTWRIGHT on January 24. I would note that it is identical to bills that passed the House in prior Congresses by a voice vote, unanimous and bipartisan.

This legislation would require that the Secretary of Energy establish a clearinghouse to share information regarding available Federal programs to help schools initiate, develop, and finance energy efficiency, distributed generation, and energy retrofitting projects. These types of energy upgrades will help schools stretch their budgets and reduce their impact on the environment at the same time.

This is a good, bipartisan bill. It is going to help schools take advantage of existing programs to cut down on their energy use. As I have said before, we should continue to encourage these innovations in energy efficiencies to help address climate change, and this bill is a good step in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a student, I never had a legislator come visit my class. As part of my district operation, I visit a school literally every week.

So we all have districts that look pretty much the same. I have probably 100-some school districts, close to 500, 600 school buildings for sure, and as I have visited these classrooms in the years that I have served, every school is different. Many of these schools are 40, 50, 60 years old.

This legislation is needed. We want to make sure that the money for education not only goes to help our students move forward, but, in fact, that they are in a safe environment. Energy conservation is something that is needed at almost every one of our schools.

This is a good piece of legislation. I hope that we can pass it again today by a strong, bipartisan—perhaps, unanimous—vote, and I urge that the Senate take it up as quickly as they can.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT). Representative CARTWRIGHT is from Pennsylvania’s Eighth Congressional District.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the leadership for bringing this bill up under suspension today, and to Representative TONKO for yielding time, also, to Republican Leader UPTON for his kind words.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the entire Energy and Commerce Committee for their long-term support for this bill. And I say “long-term” because this bill has passed the House under suspension under each of the past three Congresses.

Unfortunately, our friends in the Senate—and I use that word loosely—have yet to bring it to the floor. I am glad the House is considering this bill early in the session with plenty of time for the Senate to act.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Congressman WELCH of Vermont, particularly, for his leadership on this bill. It is no secret that he is one of the great energy efficiency gurus in the House, and it has been a pleasure for me to work with him.

Mr. Speaker, across the country, school districts spend billions of dollars on their energy every year. These

are schools in need of upgrades and improvements to their facilities.

In its most recent Infrastructure Report Card, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave the condition of our Nation's schools a grade of D-plus.

Now, what this bill proposes are enhancements that improve the state of our schools, our economy, and our environment by implementing economically and environmentally sustainable changes so school administrators can address short-term and long-term needs. In reducing their energy bills, schools can put the savings toward other educational priorities.

Now, according to the EPA and the Department of Energy, K-12 school districts, nationwide, spend approximately \$8 billion on their energy every year, second only to personnel costs. \$8 billion exceeds the costs of textbooks and supplies. An estimated \$2 billion of that cost could be saved by improving energy efficiency, an amount that can pay for 40 million textbooks.

Moreover, 43 percent of schools, according to a Department of Education survey, indicated that the poor condition of their facilities interferes with the delivery of instruction. In fact, high-performance schools can lower a school district's operating costs by up to 30 percent.

Now, there are numerous Federal initiatives already available to schools to help them become more energy efficient, but these programs are spread across the Federal Government, making it challenging, time consuming, difficult, and costly for schools to identify and take full advantage of these programs. We are talking about harried, busy school administrators that don't have the time to dive in to do that kind of research.

These programs exist for schools to utilize them. We should make every effort to assist schools in enacting sensible upgrades that help our students learn and help our schools run smoothly and efficiently.

This bipartisan Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act aims to provide a coordinating structure for schools to help schools better navigate available Federal programs and financing options. Now, this legislation does not spend any additional money, and it keeps decisionmaking authority with the States, the school boards, and the local officials.

The bill establishes a clearinghouse through the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. The clearinghouse will disseminate information on Federal programs and financing mechanisms that may be used to develop energy efficiency, distributed generation, and energy retrofitting projects for schools.

The bill also directs the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy to coordinate with Federal agencies and develop an outreach program to streamline communications and promote available Federal programs. For example, outreach may provide a sin-

gle website where school officials can learn, with one-stop shopping, about the relevant programs.

This is commonsense legislation that will ensure that schools can more easily take advantage of energy efficiency programs. It is a strategic and cost-saving investment to relieve the fiscal pressure felt by school districts across the Nation while bringing us closer to energy security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this bill.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers on our side that I am aware of, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), my colleague and friend.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member; the chairman; and the sponsor of this bill, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, in persistent advocacy.

What Mr. CARTWRIGHT said really makes sense. It is pretty bad, the condition of many of our schools throughout the country. About 43 percent are in substandard condition. It has a real impact on learning, but it also has an impact on expense. It means that kids are in cold and drafty schools or it is too hot; it is one or the other.

Energy efficiency programs can make a huge difference, and there are some that are available.

As Mr. CARTWRIGHT said, the teachers and the principals want to focus on instruction and taking care of the kids. They don't have time to manage and investigate what are all of the programs out there that may allow them to rehab their schools.

This allows the Secretary to essentially provide a blueprint so that, whether you are in a small town like Norwich, Vermont, where I am from, where we have got a population of about 3,000, or you are in an urban district in the middle of Chicago, you are going to be able to get the information you need without absorbing a lot of staff time.

And then, by the way, kids are getting involved in this question of climate change. This is a big deal because, at our schools and our high schools, there is a lot of leadership that is saying we have got an obligation to protect our planet. What is going to happen when we embrace energy efficiency on a large scale but start locally is that it is going to reduce carbon emissions.

In fact, when we passed the Waxman-Markey bill in the House—it didn't get through the Senate—where the goal was 80 percent carbon reductions by 2050, 40 percent of those carbon reductions were coming from energy efficiency.

It is what Mr. TONKO says. It is our fuel of choice. It is the cheapest way to reduce carbon emissions.

The other thing is, every time you are doing energy efficiency, it means local tradesmen and -women are doing

the work. So it is those kids who are going to have a warmer or a cooler school, and it is their moms and dads who are going to be doing the work to make that happen. So this really makes a lot of sense.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsor of this legislation and leadership on the committee for their work in bringing it forward.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage our colleagues to support this measure. Obviously, H.R. 762 enables us to make certain that we target wastefulness and energy efficiency. It is a good way to make certain that resources that can be committed to education are not wasted through inefficient use of energy—a good, strong message for the development of our children.

So it is a great bill. I applaud Representative CARTWRIGHT and his co-sponsors for moving us forward and ask that our colleagues support this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 762.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1615

RESPONSIBLE DISPOSAL REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2019

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 347) to extend the authorization of the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978 relating to the disposal site in Mesa County, Colorado.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 347

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 "Responsible Disposal Reauthorization Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION.

Section 112(a)(1)(B) of the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 7922(a)(1)(B)) is amended by striking "September 30, 2023" and inserting "September 30, 2031".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may