

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