

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4447

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 20, 2019

Mr. O'HALLERAN (for himself, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. LAMB, and Mr. NORMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on 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

A BILL

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

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Expanding Access to
5 Sustainable Energy Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

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

3 (A) a rural electric cooperative; or

4 (B) a nonprofit organization working with
5 at least 6 or more rural electric cooperatives.

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

9 (A) is capable of absorbing energy, storing
10 that energy for a period of time, and dis-
11 patching the stored energy; and

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

14 (I) was generated at an earlier time
15 for use at a later time; or

16 (II) was generated from a mechanical
17 process, and would otherwise be wasted,
18 for delivery at a later time; or

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

24 (3) ISLAND.—The term “island”, with respect
25 to a distributed generator or energy storage equip-

1 ment, means that the generator or equipment con-
2 tinues to power a location in the absence of electric
3 power from a primary source.

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

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

11 (B) can connect and disconnect from the
12 grid to operate in both grid-connected mode
13 and island mode.

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

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

23 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
24 the Secretary of Energy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

19 (c) GRANTS.—

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

25 (2) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a
26 grant under paragraph (1), an eligible entity shall

1 submit to the Secretary an application at such time,
2 in such manner, and containing such information as
3 the Secretary may require.

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

6 (A) shall use the grant—

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

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

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

18 (iv) to perform a cost-benefit analysis
19 with respect to an energy storage or
20 microgrid project;

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

1 (vi) to purchase and install necessary
2 equipment, materials, and supplies for
3 demonstration of emerging technologies;
4 and

5 (B) may use the grant to obtain technical
6 assistance from experts in carrying out the ac-
7 tivities described in this Act.

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

10 (A) implement a public awareness cam-
11 paign about the project implemented under the
12 grant in the community in which the eligible en-
13 tity is located;

14 (B) submit to the Secretary, and make
15 available to the public, a report that de-
16 scribes—

17 (i) any energy cost savings and envi-
18 ronmental benefits achieved under the
19 project; and

20 (ii) the results of the project, includ-
21 ing quantitative assessments to the extent
22 practicable, associated with each activity
23 described in paragraph (3)(A); and

24 (C) create and disseminate useful or inno-
25 vative tools and resources that will benefit other

1 rural electric cooperatives, which may include
2 cost calculators, guidebooks, handbooks, tem-
3 plates and training courses.

4 (5) COST-SHARE.—Activities under this sub-
5 section shall be subject to the cost-sharing require-
6 ments of section 988 of the Energy Policy Act of
7 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16352).

8 (d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

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

12 (A) identifying opportunities for energy
13 storage and microgrid projects;

14 (B) understanding the technical and eco-
15 nomic characteristics of energy storage or
16 microgrid projects;

17 (C) understanding financing alternatives;

18 (D) permitting and siting issues;

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

21 (F) reviewing and obtaining computer soft-
22 ware for assessment, design, and operation and
23 maintenance of energy storage or microgrid sys-
24 tems; and

1 (G) understanding and utilizing the reli-
2 ability and resiliency benefits of energy storage
3 and microgrid projects.

4 (2) **EXTERNAL CONTRACTS.**—In carrying out
5 subsection (a)(2), the Secretary may enter into con-
6 tracts with third-party experts, including engineer-
7 ing, finance, and insurance experts, to provide tech-
8 nical assistance to eligible entities relating to the ac-
9 tivities described in subparagraphs (A) through (G)
10 of paragraph (1), or other relevant activities, as de-
11 termined by the Secretary.

12 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

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

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

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