



National Conference of State Legislatures Office of State-Federal Relations

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U.S. Senate Passes Broad Energy Bill

On April 20, the U.S. Senate passed [S. 2012, the Energy Policy Modernization Act](#), a broad energy bill that includes provisions on everything from energy efficiency, electric utilities, renewable energy and oil and gas programs. If enacted, this bill would be the first energy package to pass Congress since 2007.

The bill aims to:

- Expedite permits for natural gas export facilities;
- Strengthen building codes to make new homes and buildings more energy efficient as well as encourage more research and development into energy efficient technologies;
- Enhance electric grid security and give more authority to the Department of Energy (DOE) to intervene during a cyber-attack;
- Allow co-production of electricity from oil and gas leases using geothermal technologies;
- Reauthorize state energy assistance programs;
- Reauthorize Weatherization Assistance Program;
- Increase coordination between states and Bureau of Land Management on oil and natural gas production
- Expand sportsmen opportunities on public land;
- Recognize biomass as a carbon neutral renewable energy source; and
- Permanently authorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program that provides money to protect and maintain national parks and wilderness areas throughout the country.

In December 2015, the U.S. House passed its own energy bill, [H.R. 8](#). The two chambers can now work together to finalize a compromise bill to send to the President. Lead sponsor of the Senate bill and Chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) said that she would like a full conference committee between the two chambers, rather than relying on informal talks, to finalize the robust package, although it remains unclear how the bill will proceed in congress.

Additionally, the ultimate fate of any compromise energy package is unclear as the President issued a [veto threat](#) for H.R. 8 when it passed the House last year and [voiced concern](#) over provisions of S. 2012 earlier this year.

For any additional questions or concerns please contact NCSL staff [Ben Husch](#) (202-624-7779) or [Melanie Condon](#) (202-624-3597).