



Weatherization Enhancement, and Local Energy Efficiency Investment and Accountability Act

U.S. Senators Chris Coons (D-Del.), Susan Collins (R-Maine), and Jack Reed (D-R.I.)

The Weatherization Assistance Program has been the heart of the federal government's energy efficiency strategy for 36 years, assisting low-income families that lack the resources to make their homes safer, healthier, and more energy efficient. Administered by the Department of Energy, the program funds activities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, five U.S. territories, and three tribal governments. It is responsible for energy efficiency upgrades in more than 7.4 million homes across the country, including more than 1 million homes in just the last four years.

The goal of this program is to reduce energy costs for low-income families — particularly for the elderly, people with disabilities, and children — by improving the energy efficiency of their homes and enhancing their health and safety. For every dollar invested in the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), participating American homeowners have saved more than \$2.50 on their energy costs. With a network of around 1,000 local agencies providing services across the country, WAP employs more residential energy efficiency professionals than anyone in the nation. Typical weatherization measures have included attic insulation, dense pack sidewall insulation, air sealing, heating system repairs and, when necessary, replacements, duct sealing and insulation, and base load measures.

The program has pioneered residential energy efficiency technology and is the glue holding residential energy efficiency programs together. WAP is also the central leader in the development of the home performance industry-wide *Guidelines for Home Energy Professionals* — a suite of resources including work quality specifications, training program accreditation, job task analyses, and worker certifications.

The State Energy Program (SEP) was established 38 years ago and has programs in place in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. The SEP funds are leveraged with state and local funds to encourage strategic and programmatic energy-related activities to increase energy efficiency, develop alternative energy, promote energy development, and reduce energy dependency. Each dollar of SEP funding results in a savings of more than \$7 in energy costs.

The most recent authorization of the WAP and SEP expired in 2012. The bipartisan *Weatherization Enhancement, and Local Energy Efficiency Investment and Accountability Act* would renew these programs for five years.

The *Weatherization Enhancement, and Local Energy Efficiency Investment and Accountability Act* would:

- Reauthorize and extend the WAP and SEP at the Department of Energy through 2018;
- Develop a competitive, leveraged grant program for non-profits that have a track record of success to access the WAP;
- Require minimum professional standards for WAP contractors and workers, and require an independent quality assurance program.

This bipartisan bill is critical for the support of longstanding federal programs that are working in conjunction with states and local partners. It will ensure two enormously successful energy efficiency programs continue to help homeowners save on their energy bills and make their homes safer.