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NEWS RELEASE

MAJOR DEAL ON FEDERAL ENERGY BILL MOVES U.S. FORWARD ON RENEWABLES AND CLIMATE ACTION

Bipartisan bill that takes aim at greenhouse gas emissions expected to pass today as part of the omnibus package

For Immediate Release

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WASHINGTON -- Congress struck a last minute bipartisan deal on a major energy bill expected to pass on Monday as part of the omnibus package to fund the federal government. The energy bill includes increased funding for renewable and energy efficiency programs. It also includes a landmark deal to phase out hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which are especially potent greenhouse gases. If it passes as expected, the legislation, which would also need the president's signature, requires an 85 percent phase out of HFCs over 15 years, meaning the U.S. would join more than [170 other countries](#) that have already made this commitment. Global phase out on this scale could avoid a 0.5 degree Celsius of warming by the end of the century.

In terms of increasing energy efficiency, the bill reauthorizes an important weatherization [program](#) for homes. It also funds the [Diesel Emissions Reduction Act](#), which helps get the oldest, dirtiest trucks and buses off the road, and significantly increases funding for the [Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy \(ARPA-E\)](#), which aims to develop new ways to generate, store and use clean energy.

In addition, the bill provides loan guarantees for projects that deploy innovative emission-reducing technologies and establishes new programs to accelerate the transition to clean energy to market. While the legislation still includes fossil fuel and nuclear research and development funding, it shifts funding parity towards renewables. It funds the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at \$2 billion more over five years than the amount provided to the Office of Fossil Energy or Office of Nuclear Energy. The deal also includes short-term tax incentives for wind and solar energy projects. While these incentives will help advance the transition to renewable energy, the short-term

extension serves more as a placeholder for where more investment will be needed to create strong market certainty. A long-term extension and modernization of the credits to include renewable technologies like energy storage is still needed.

In response, experts from Environment America and U.S. PIRG issued the following statements:

“This deal is a great example of lawmakers reaching across the political divide to get important work done for the American people,” **said Matt Casale, director of U.S. PIRG’s Environment Campaigns.** “It is imperative that we take swift action on climate change if we’re going to have any chance of avoiding its worst impacts. We’re grateful to Congress for stepping up and making this meaningful progress at the end of a difficult year. Phasing out HFCs -- known as ‘super greenhouse gases’ -- will bring significant climate relief relatively quickly. And investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy will put us on the path toward a cleaner, healthier future. This bill is a step forward in a lot of areas, and we look forward to building on its progress in the coming years.”

“This energy bill marks an American inflection point between our dirty energy past and our clean energy future,” **said Johanna Neumann, senior director of Environment America’s Campaign for 100% Renewable Energy.** “Regardless of their political leanings, Americans have long sent a clear and consistent message to Washington: We choose investing in renewables like solar and wind over dirty energy. Now, by prioritizing clean energy over dirty fossil fuel options, investing in research for renewable sources of the future, and ratcheting up energy efficiency, Congress is aligning its spending with America’s values. Lawmakers deserve credit for passing a bill that takes a big step toward powering America’s energy future with nonpolluting sources that never run out. With the potential to do even more, we look forward to working with Congress in the new year to continue the drive toward a nation powered by clean renewable energy.”

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