AN ENERGY PLAN FOR AMERICA’S FUTURE

ISSUE

Congress has the opportunity to finalize legislation this year to enhance America’s energy security, modernize infrastructure, boost exports, and promote efficiency. ACEC supports the House passed energy bill (H.R. 8) and pending Senate legislation (S. 2012), and urges Congress to send the President a final bill to develop America’s energy resources this year.

BACKGROUND

Despite recent oil price volatility, the United States is in the midst of an energy revolution. The nation continues to meet more of its energy needs, with greater end-use efficiency and record production of oil, natural gas, and renewable energy. Energy imports reached record lows in 2014. With the recent lifting of the oil export ban and operation of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) export facilities, energy exports are expected to increase. America’s engineering industry continues to play a key role in supporting this expansion of energy markets.

The 114th Congress has made strong progress in moving legislation to enhance energy development and productivity. The House has cleared H.R. 8, the North American Energy Security and Infrastructure Act, which includes provisions to expedite the approval of LNG export facilities and cross border energy infrastructure projects. The measure puts special emphasis on electrical grid resilience, with provisions to enhance emergency response to natural disasters and other threats, and requirements for utilities to develop plans to improve infrastructure and use advanced technologies to mitigate against outages.

The Senate bill -- S. 2012, the Energy Policy and Modernization Act -- also includes provisions to speed the permitting of natural gas facilities and electric transmission infrastructure, as well as counter threats to the nation’s electrical grid. The bill promotes energy efficiency in public and private buildings through the development of model building codes, and supports the development of cost-effective renewable energy storage technologies. In addition, the measure would create a coordinating committee between the Departments of Energy and Interior to better manage the nation’s energy and water policies.

Both bills include strong policies to promote energy markets, helping to make the nation’s energy abundant, efficient, affordable, clean, diverse, reliable and secure.

KEY POINTS

- The U.S. continues to benefit from a national energy policy incorporating an “all of the above” strategy that expands the diverse domestic production and delivery of energy resources, i.e., fossil fuels, nuclear, renewables, energy efficiency and storage.
- House and Senate energy bills include strong policies to protect and modernize energy infrastructure, improve regulatory processes, and promote efficiency.
- Congress has a unique opportunity in 2016 to come together on a consensus energy package that will enhance America’s energy security and promote jobs and economic growth.