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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide financial assistance, through States and Indian Tribes, to establish and maintain energy hubs to increase awareness and access to energy and energy efficiency programs and opportunities to improve energy affordability, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. TONKO introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on _____

A BILL

To amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide financial assistance, through States and Indian Tribes, to establish and maintain energy hubs to increase awareness and access to energy and energy efficiency programs and opportunities to improve energy affordability, and for other purposes.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Regional Energy Hubs
3 Act of 2026”.

4 **SEC. 2. REGIONAL ENERGY HUBS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Part D of title III of the Energy
6 Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6321 et seq.) is
7 amended by adding at the end the following:

8 **“SEC. 367. REGIONAL ENERGY HUBS.**

9 “(a) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—Upon request from a
10 State that has in effect an approved State energy con-
11 servation plan under this part, or an Indian Tribe, the
12 Secretary shall provide financial assistance to such State
13 or Indian Tribe to designate and provide funding to en-
14 ergy hubs pursuant to this section.

15 “(b) REGIONAL ENERGY HUBS.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State or Indian Tribe
17 receiving financial assistance under this section shall
18 designate and provide funding to one or more energy
19 hubs to serve a specific geographic region within
20 such State or under the jurisdiction of such Indian
21 Tribe to build local capacity by leveraging multidisci-
22 plinary partnerships within its designated region to
23 increase awareness of and access to energy and effi-
24 ciency programs and opportunities to improve energy
25 affordability, including tax credits, grants, loans, re-
26 bates, financing, and other private, Federal, State,

1 local, and utility-administered programs and incen-
2 tives.

3 “(2) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION AND EQUI-
4 TABLE ACCESS TO ENERGY HUB SERVICES.—When
5 designating an energy hub under paragraph (1),
6 each State or Indian Tribe shall provide for an ap-
7 propriate geographic distribution of energy hubs to
8 ensure equitable access to services provided by the
9 energy hubs in disadvantaged communities and un-
10 derserved rural communities within such State or
11 under the jurisdiction of such Indian Tribe.

12 “(c) ENERGY HUB RESPONSIBILITIES.—Each energy
13 hub designated under subsection (b)(1) shall—

14 “(1) support regionally specific efforts that im-
15 prove energy affordability, community resilience, and
16 energy security to respond to potential energy dis-
17 ruptions within the region;

18 “(2) provide evidence-based outreach and edu-
19 cation to raise public awareness of the benefits,
20 availability, and eligibility requirements of energy
21 and energy efficiency programs and opportunities to
22 improve energy affordability with the goals of in-
23 creasing participation in such programs and access
24 to private, Federal, State, local, and other energy
25 and energy efficiency programs and opportunities;

1 “(3) conduct regionally specific community en-
2 gagement with rural individuals, service-disabled vet-
3 eran-owned businesses, low- and moderate-income
4 individuals, nonprofit organizations, local govern-
5 ments, small businesses, minority- and women-owned
6 enterprises, affordable housing owners, and other en-
7 tities that may face challenges in accessing energy
8 and energy efficiency programs and opportunities;

9 “(4) analyze and advance solutions to regional
10 barriers to accessing energy and energy efficiency
11 programs and opportunities;

12 “(5) coordinate with entities, including non-
13 profit organizations, local governments, planning or-
14 ganizations, and agricultural cooperative extension
15 systems, that conduct community outreach and edu-
16 cation and provide relevant services within the re-
17 gion;

18 “(6) address energy affordability challenges by
19 supporting participation of low- and moderate-in-
20 come community members in relevant assistance
21 programs, including assistance provided pursuant to
22 the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of
23 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.), the Weatherization
24 Assistance Program carried out under part A of title
25 IV of the Energy Conservation and Production Act,

1 a program administered by a State or Indian Tribe
2 as described in section 50121(c) or section 50122(c)
3 of Public Law 117–169 (commonly known as the
4 ‘Inflation Reduction Act’), utility-administered pro-
5 grams, energy affordability programs administered
6 by States and Indian Tribes, and other programs
7 and opportunities to reduce energy use and costs;

8 “(7) facilitate connections between community
9 members and local energy professionals, contractors,
10 installers, and consultants to perform energy assess-
11 ments, make better informed energy decisions, and
12 install energy and energy efficiency measures;

13 “(8) support access to nonenergy efficiency
14 building rehabilitation resources, including lead and
15 mold abatement resources, to enable energy and en-
16 ergy efficiency measures and reduce project defer-
17 rals; and

18 “(9) coordinate with workforce development or-
19 ganizations, labor organizations, educational institu-
20 tions, and businesses to enhance local workforce de-
21 velopment efforts to ensure the availability of a local
22 workforce capable of supporting energy and energy
23 efficiency programs and opportunities within the re-
24 gion, including by connecting community members
25 to job training, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships,

1 educational, and employment resources and opportu-
2 nities.

3 “(d) PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS.—Each energy hub
4 designated under subsection (b)(1) shall consist of several
5 partner organizations to fulfill the responsibilities under
6 subsection (c). Each such energy hub shall have partner
7 organizations that—

8 “(1) have expertise with energy, energy effi-
9 ciency, workforce development, economic develop-
10 ment, housing, educational and public awareness
11 campaigns for underserved community members
12 within the region, and other areas needed to fulfill
13 the responsibilities under subsection (c);

14 “(2) have existing relationships with, or the
15 ability to form relationships with, entities within the
16 region served by the energy hub to increase access
17 to and participation in energy and energy efficiency
18 programs and opportunities, which may include—

19 “(A) nonprofit organizations;

20 “(B) affordable housing owners and devel-
21 opers;

22 “(C) community action agencies;

23 “(D) land-grant universities managing a
24 cooperative extension system and other edu-
25 cational institutions;

1 “(E) rural development organizations;

2 “(F) social service providers;

3 “(G) local governments;

4 “(H) labor organizations;

5 “(I) workforce development organizations;

6 “(J) economic development organizations;

7 “(K) local businesses; and

8 “(L) electric and natural gas utilities;

9 “(3) ensure services provided by the energy hub
10 are adequately available throughout the entire geo-
11 graphic region covered by the energy hub; and

12 “(4) commit to specific activities, administrative
13 capacity, staffing, and resources that such organiza-
14 tions shall undertake or provide for the operation of
15 the energy hub.

16 “(e) LEAD ORGANIZATION.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each energy hub des-
18 ignated under subsection (b)(1) shall be led by a
19 community-based organization located within such
20 region that has demonstrated existing relevant part-
21 nerships, or the ability to develop relevant multi-
22 disciplinary partnerships, to carry out the respon-
23 sibilities under subsection (c).

1 “(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The lead organiza-
2 tion of each energy hub designated under subsection
3 (b)(1) shall be responsible for—

4 “(A) coordination of partner organizations
5 within the energy hub;

6 “(B) provision of administrative capacity
7 to ensure the effective management and oper-
8 ation of the energy hub; and

9 “(C) meeting any data collection and re-
10 porting requirements determined by the Sec-
11 retary and the State or Indian Tribe receiving
12 financial assistance under this section.

13 “(f) REPORTING.—Each calendar year, the lead orga-
14 nization of each energy hub designated under subsection
15 (b)(1) shall submit a written report to the Secretary and
16 the relevant State or Indian Tribe on the activities of the
17 energy hub during the previous calendar year, which shall
18 include—

19 “(1) a description of the partnerships of the en-
20 ergy hub, including the effectiveness of and barriers
21 to leveraging other Federal and non-Federal sources
22 of funding;

23 “(2) a description of the outreach, educational,
24 and public awareness activities undertaken by the

1 energy hub, including any evaluations conducted of
2 the effectiveness of such activities;

3 “(3) a description of activities undertaken by
4 the energy hub to support local workforce develop-
5 ment, educational, and job training activities;

6 “(4) a description of activities undertaken by
7 the energy hub to enable greater participation in en-
8 ergy and energy efficiency programs and opportuni-
9 ties to improve energy affordability, including esti-
10 mates of participation in affordability programs
11 within the region served by the energy hub, energy
12 savings and utility bill savings for community mem-
13 bers accessing such programs, and opportunities as
14 a result of energy hub activities; and

15 “(5) a regional assessment that identifies the
16 needs, barriers, and opportunities to fulfill the re-
17 sponsibilities under subsection (c) within the region
18 served by the energy hub.

19 “(g) REGIONAL ENERGY HUB ADVISORY COM-
20 MITTEE.—The Secretary, in coordination with other rel-
21 evant Federal agencies, shall establish a Regional Energy
22 Hub Advisory Committee consisting of States, Indian
23 Tribes, energy hubs, and other relevant stakeholders to
24 provide information and technical assistance for the estab-
25 lishment, operation, and improvement of energy hubs, in-

1 cluding through the development of best practices, stand-
2 ards, recommendations, tools, and educational resources
3 to be applicable to the management and operation of en-
4 ergy hubs across States and Indian Tribes.

5 “(h) COORDINATION.—

6 “(1) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—The Sec-
7 retary shall consult and coordinate with relevant
8 Federal agencies, including the Secretary of Agri-
9 culture, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Devel-
10 opment, the Administrator of the Environmental
11 Protection Agency, the Secretary of Health and
12 Human Services, the Secretary of Commerce, the
13 Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of the Treasury,
14 and the Administrator of the Small Business Admin-
15 istration, that administer programs and opportuni-
16 ties relevant to energy hubs fulfilling responsibilities
17 under subsection (c).

18 “(2) COORDINATION OF STATE AND LOCAL
19 PROGRAMS.—Each State and Indian Tribe receiving
20 financial assistance under this section shall carry out
21 consultation and coordination between the energy
22 hubs and relevant programs administered by each
23 State or Indian Tribe, including programs related to
24 energy, energy efficiency, environmental remediation,
25 community outreach and education, housing, agri-

1 culture, economic development, and workforce devel-
2 opment.

3 “(3) BRAIDING OF FUNDING.—The Secretary
4 shall advise energy hubs designated under subsection
5 (b)(1) on and, to the extent possible, reduce barriers
6 to the braiding or otherwise combining of funding
7 from various Federal and non-Federal sources to le-
8 verage additional resources and better enable energy
9 hubs to fulfill responsibilities under subsection (c).

10 “(i) FUNDING.—

11 “(1) ALLOCATION TO STATES.—Except as pro-
12 vided in paragraph (2), to the extent practicable, the
13 Secretary shall allocate funding made available to
14 carry out this section in accordance with the formula
15 used for distribution of financial assistance provided
16 pursuant to this part to States that have in effect
17 an approved State energy conservation plan under
18 this part.

19 “(2) INDIAN TRIBES.—To the extent prac-
20 ticable, the Secretary shall set aside and distribute
21 not less than 5 percent of amounts made available
22 for each fiscal year to carry out this section to pro-
23 vide financial assistance to Indian Tribes.

24 “(j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 “(1) COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION.—The
2 term ‘community-based organization’ means a public
3 or private nonprofit organization that—

4 “(A) provides educational or other related
5 services to community members;

6 “(B) is representative of the community or
7 significant segments of the community;

8 “(C) has a physical presence in the com-
9 munity; and

10 “(D) seeks input from community mem-
11 bers.

12 “(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian Tribe’
13 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
14 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
15 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).”.

16 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of con-
17 tents for the Energy Policy and Conservation Act is
18 amended by adding after the item related to section 366
19 the following:

 “Sec. 367. Regional energy hubs.”.

20 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
21 365(f) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42
22 U.S.C. 6325(f)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
23 lowing:

24 “(3) REGIONAL ENERGY HUBS.—In addition to
25 the authorization of appropriations under paragraph

1 (1), for the purposes of carrying out section 367,
2 there are authorized to be appropriated \$50,000,000
3 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031.”.