

February 27, 2019

The Honorable Bobby L. Rush
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Fred Upton
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rush and Ranking Member Upton:

On behalf of the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD), I am writing with respect to the legislative hearing, “Clean Energy Infrastructure and the Workforce to Build it,” that the Subcommittee held on February 27 and H.R. 1315, “Blue Collar to Green Collar Jobs Development Act of 2019.”

The electric power industry supports more than 7 million jobs across the country—about 1 out of every 20 jobs. We are responsible for \$865 billion of our nation’s GDP—about 5 percent. And, electric companies invest more than \$100 billion each year in smarter energy infrastructure.

We want to commend Chairman Rush for his leadership in promoting a 21st century energy workforce. This long-standing goal of the Chairman’s has been reflected in legislation introduced during the last several Congresses. The energy industry appreciates the Chairman’s willingness to work with us on these bills.

CEWD is a non-profit national organization that brings together the energy industry, educators, government, and communities to build the alliances, processes, and tools to develop a diverse, qualified workforce for the energy industry. Originally formed in 2006 to address concerns about an aging skilled workforce, CEWD members today include more than 100 electric and natural gas companies, six trade associations (Edison Electric Institute, American Gas Association, Nuclear Energy Institute, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, American Public Power

Association, and Distribution Contractors Association), large supplemental labor contractors, and unions (the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and Utility Workers Union of America). CEWD focuses on delivering proven workforce development solutions, curriculum, tools, and data that improve the rate and quality of hiring into industry jobs.

Career Awareness—In a series of CEWD surveys with member companies and state consortia in 2018, career awareness continued to be one of the most important priorities in building a diverse, qualified energy workforce. CEWD launched its national career awareness brand, Get Into Energy (GIE), in 2006 and has since launched a family of brands and career awareness resources.

CEWD and its members engage in a wide variety of career awareness activities. Career awareness activities are aimed at five key demographics: youth, low-income young adults, women, veterans, and transitioning workers. The overall intent of these activities is to make it easier for students and jobseekers to find us, understand our jobs, and understand what education pathways will lead to an energy job.

The Get Into Energy website (getintoenergy.com) was created to raise awareness of jobs in the energy industry. Energy jobs offer competitive pay and benefits, are widely available and generally immune from outsourcing, and provide a valuable service to the community.

CEWD energy career websites are targeted to key demographic populations:

- **Get Into Energy:** CEWD's national website, getintoenergy.com, provides resources for each key demographic to understand the pathways for critical jobs, where to find training, and a jobs site that lists all jobs currently posted by CEWD members.
- **Get Into Energy/Get Into STEM** was launched at stem.getintoenergy.com. The web site positions all energy careers as STEM careers and has a teacher's section as well as pages with energy and STEM-related competitions and contests and scholarships.
- **Troops to Energy Jobs:** The veteran-focused site for Troops to Energy Jobs, troopstoenergyjobs.com, includes a roadmap for veterans seeking jobs in the industry, a unique-to-CEWD military occupation code translator that ties military jobs more specifically to energy jobs, a registration site that allows veterans to enter basic information about themselves (such as military occupation, field of expertise, resumes, and geographical area they would like to work in) and see information about companies located in their region. Veterans now make up 11 percent of our workforce, and in Nuclear Operations that number is 22.5 percent. Companies from across the industry are reaching out to veterans for their training, leadership, and service mentality to fill these critical positions.

National Energy Education Network—Over the past several years, CEWD has worked to create the National Energy Education Network (NEEN), a national consortium of energy companies and their education partners. Members of NEEN include community colleges and other educational institutions that have active partnerships with CEWD member companies, have relevant programs of study for our four critical job categories (lineworkers, technicians, operators, and engineers), and are producing quality candidates who are being hired into industry jobs. These partnerships

and programs provide the baseline for documenting what works, sharing curriculum and best practices, and identifying the potential supply of candidates from high schools, technical and community colleges, and universities. NEEN partnerships currently include over 200 educational institutions representing more than 350 energy programs.

Energy Competency Model—CEWD, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor, developed the Energy Competency Model that defines basic competencies, industry fundamentals, industry technical competencies, and job-specific competencies in eight separate tiers. The Energy Competency Model is designed to provide a consistent definition of the competencies required to work in the industry. The CEWD Energy Competency Model has proven to be a valuable tool for educators, workforce investment professionals, and businesses to articulate the skills required to perform successfully in various jobs in the energy industry.

Energy Career Clusters—Career Clusters are groupings of occupations/career specialties used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and instruction. Career Clusters identify pathways from secondary school to two- and four-year colleges, graduate school, and the workplace. But there is not a national Career Cluster for energy education that links to industry jobs. Since 2006, CEWD has encouraged states to develop an Energy Career Cluster and Energy Pathways in the secondary and post-secondary education systems to build awareness of how energy careers fit within this system, and to give industry an opportunity to provide input into curriculum and provide context to what students are learning. Several states now have state Energy Career Clusters.

State Energy Workforce Consortia—Each state differs in its education systems, as do the energy companies operating in a state. That means that the workforce development solutions must be tailored to the individual needs of the companies and the demographics of the talent pool available.

Today, nearly 30 states are represented by State Energy Workforce Consortia. The purpose of each state consortium is to identify and develop programmatic solutions that consortium members use to meet the current and future workforce needs of the energy industry in their state. Each consortium is encouraged and supported in developing a strategic workforce plan that takes into account specific challenges of the industry in the state. CEWD provides assistance in organizing and starting a consortium and has a state consortium page on the CEWD Members Implementation Wizard with resources and tools for starting and maintaining a state consortium.

CEWD Communities of Practice—These communities have grown in number and importance over the past two years and have evolved into true “think tanks” for CEWD and its members. The communities encompass areas such as Diversity and Inclusion, State Energy Workforce Consortia, Troops to Energy Jobs Employers, Contractors, High School implementation and others.

As mentioned above, the energy industry appreciates the focus of H.R. 1315, “Blue Collar to Green Collar Jobs Development Act of 2019,” on promoting a strong energy workforce. The energy industry is undergoing a transformation, based on customer expectations for clean energy, low natural gas prices, and declining costs for renewable energy technologies. While developing

capabilities to meet future needs, the industry must continue to develop a workforce with skills for traditional energy production and delivery.

H.R. 1315 requires the Department of Energy (DOE) to provide direct assistance to entities to carry out a comprehensive, nationwide program to improve education and training for jobs in energy-related industries. The bill also would establish a clearinghouse to provide information and resources on training programs. We appreciate that the bill requires the Secretary to work with different organizations, including energy-related industries, in carrying out the program. We believe that CEWD and its members can be instrumental partners in ensuring that this program best meets the needs of the energy industry.

The bill encourages underrepresented groups, including minorities, women, and veterans to enter into the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. This focus mirrors the outreach that CEWD is doing with these same groups. In addition, our industry believes that both new and incumbent employees must have strong skills that range from academic skills such as STEM to employability and technical skills. Competencies such as problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork, collaboration, and the ability to learn are equally as important as technical skills in addressing the workforce needs.

The bill also requires the development of voluntary guidelines or best practices for educational institutions to help provide graduates with the skills necessary for jobs in energy-related industries, again with the input from energy-related industries. We believe that CEWD's experience with curriculum design and instruction will be invaluable in DOE's development of these guidelines.

While educators are working more closely with industry to fill the talent pipeline, the reality is that all educational programs are not created equal. The most successful ones are based on a common set of competencies and industry requirements, which readies graduates to have the necessary qualifications for the same job in different parts of the country or with different companies in the same state. When curriculum is not built on a common set of foundational skills that are common to all jobs, a student graduating from one program may have to start over in another program if a job is not available in the area or location they originally targeted.

Section 202 of the bill establishes a new energy workforce grant program. We believe the grant program would be more effective if the grants could be used to pay for stipends for potential employees and not just wages for existing employees. We look forward to working with the Chairman on this issue.

Based on the energy industry's workforce needs and CEWD's experience in working with educational institutions to design curriculum, we believe it is important that the definition of "educational institution" in section 203 of the bill include community colleges, vocational schools, and technical schools. The energy industry offers many high-paying, skilled jobs that do not require a traditional four-year degree. By ensuring that the program established in this legislation


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is available to a wide variety of educational institutions, it can provide valuable career pathways to a much broader group of workers.

Energy companies are essential partners in workforce development efforts and in building strong, stable communities. We look forward to working with you to strengthen energy workforce development programs as this legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Miller". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Mary Miller
President