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DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: FY2021 Appropriations

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) is responsible for enabling renewable energy and end-use energy efficiency technology development and implementation. For example, EERE oversees vehicle technology, solar energy, advanced manufacturing, and weatherization programs. Other activities include participation in intergovernmental programs, establishing minimum energy conservation standards for appliances and equipment, and providing technical support.

EERE collaborates with industry, academia, national laboratories, and others to conduct and support research, development, demonstration, and deployment activities. EERE also manages a portfolio of programs that support state and local governments, tribes, and school leaders. Further, EERE oversees and supports the research and infrastructure of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)—the only U.S. national laboratory solely dedicated to researching and developing renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

For FY2021, the Trump Administration requested that funding levels for EERE be reduced by more than 74% from FY2020 enacted levels. Of the FY2021 request for EERE, 17% would be reserved for program direction.

EERE Appropriations

EERE receives funding from the annual Energy and Water Development (E&W) appropriations bill. Under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, P.L. 116-260, EERE received $2.86 billion for FY2021, approximately $72 million more than the enacted FY2020 level of $2.79 billion (the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020; P.L. 116-94, Division C). From FY2018 to FY2021, appropriations for EERE averaged $2.59 billion annually in current dollars (see **Table 1**).

EERE appropriations are split into four categories: (1) sustainable transportation, (2) renewable energy, (3) energy efficiency, and (4) corporate support (e.g., program administration and facilities). Averaging the appropriations for each category from FY2018 to FY2021 indicates that approximately 28% of the appropriations were spent on sustainable transportation, 23% on renewable energy, 39% on energy efficiency, and 11% on corporate support.

Themes considered during the Energy and Water Development appropriations process for FY2021 include:

- Supporting the Grid Modernization Initiative to improve reliability, resiliency, and affordability of electricity;
- Supporting research in vehicle technologies, bioenergy technologies, and hydrogen and fuel cell technologies;
- Supporting the integration of renewable energy and energy storage technologies and emissions-reducing technologies into nonelectric sectors; and
- Supporting energy efficiency research for the buildings and industrial sectors.

Executive Branch Actions

For FY2021, the Trump Administration requested $719.6 million for EERE—roughly a 74% reduction from the FY2020 enacted level of $2.79 billion. The Trump Administration proposed reductions in funding for sustainable transportation, renewable energy, and energy efficiency. The Trump Administration called for EERE to focus on "early-stage research and development" and "long-range (5-15 years) transformation technologies, materials, and process," stating that "industry typically focuses on near term (2-4 years) investments in marginal improvements to capacity or efficiency." To meet this objective, the request proposed to reduce funding for several EERE initiatives. The request would have terminated both the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and the State Energy Program (SEP). Further, the request contained no funds for the five Clean Energy Manufacturing Innovation Institutes, and recommended that balances from prior-year appropriations be used to wind down and terminate the existing institutes.

Legislative Actions

Funding of EERE was of interest to the 116th Congress. Concerns included not only the level of EERE appropriations, but also which activities EERE should support. The 116th Congress continued to support the WAP and the SEP and increased funding for FY2021 for several energy efficiency programs compared to FY2020 enacted levels. For programs within sustainable transportation and renewable energy, some programs received funding increases, others received funding decreases, and some were stable compared to FY2020 enacted funding levels.

The House-approved bill (H.R. 7617, Division C) included "additional" funding for EERE. Under Title VI, the House recommended $8.33 billion in emergency funding for weatherization improvements to low-income housing, energy efficiency and conservation block grants, and electric vehicle infrastructure. The Senate Appropriations Committee did not consider an FY2021 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, but the committee majority did issue a draft bill and explanatory statement.

The Senate majority draft and P.L. 116-260 did not include emergency funding for EERE.

Table 1. EERE FY2018-FY2021 Enacted Appropriations and FY2021 Appropriations Status
(in millions of dollars)

	FY2018 Enacted	FY2019 Enacted	FY2020 Enacted	FY2021 Request	FY2021 House	FY2021 Senate Draft[a]	FY2021 Enacted
EERE, Total	*2,321.8*	*2,379.0*	*2,790.0*	*719.6*	*2,848.0*	*2,848.0*	*2,861.8*
Sustainable Transportation	**674.0**	**690.0**	**805.5**	**160.9**	**804.0**	**804.5**	**805.0**
Vehicle Technologies	337.5	344.0	396.0	74.4	396.0	410.0	400.0
Bioenergy Technologies	221.5	226.0	259.5	44.5	258.0	244.5	255.0
Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies	115.0	120.0	150.0	42.0	150.0	150.0	150.0
Renewable Energy	**519.5**	**527.5**	**642.0**	**160.1**	**638.0**	**641.8**	**646.0**
Solar Energy	241.6	246.5	280.0	67.0	280.0	233.8	280.0
Wind Energy	92.0	92.0	104.0	22.1	104.0	115.0	110.0
Water Power	105.0	105.0	148.0	45.0	145.4	148.0	150.0
Geothermal Technologies	80.9	84.0	110.0	26.0	108.5	105.0	106.0
Renewable Energy Grid Integration[b]	—	—	—	—	—	40.0	—
Energy Efficiency	**858.7**	**888.0**	**1,091.0**	**164.0**	**1,100.0**	**1,102.5**	**1,103.5**
Advanced Manufacturing	305.0	320.0	395.0	94.6	395.0	395.0	396.0
Building Technologies	220.7	226.0	285.0	61.0	285.0	295.0	290.0
Federal Energy Management Program	27.0	30.0	40.0	8.4	40.0	40.0	40.0
Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program	306.0	312.0	371.0	0	380.0	372.5	377.5
Weatherization Assistance Program	248.0	254.0	305.0	0	310.0	305.0	310.0
Training and Technical Assistance	3.0	3.0	3.5	0	5.0	5.0	5.0
State Energy Program Grants	55.0	55.0	62.5	0	65.0	62.5	62.5
Corporate Support[c]	**269.5**	**273.5**	**309.5**	**234.6**	**308.2**	**305.5**	**309.5**
Facilities and Infrastructure	92.0	97.0	130.0	107.0	128.7	130.0	130.0
Program Direction	162.5	162.5	165.0	122.6	165.0	161.0	165.0
Strategic Programs	15.0	14.0	14.5	5.0	14.5	14.5	14.5
Use of Prior-Year Balances	0.0	0.0	—	0	0	-4.1	0
Rescissions	0.0	0.0	-58.0	0	-2.2	-2.2	-2.2

Source: P.L. 115-244 Division A Joint Explanatory Statement; FY2021 Budget Request vol. 3, part 1 (February 2020); P.L. 116-260 Division D Explanatory Statement; H.Rept. 116-449; FY2021 Senate Appropriations Committee majority draft explanatory statement.

Notes: EERE = DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; NREL = National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Amounts may not sum due to rounding.

a. The Senate Appropriations Committee did not consider an FY2021 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill, but the committee majority did issue a draft bill and explanatory statement.
b. Renewable Energy Grid Integration appears as a separate category in the FY2021 Senate Appropriations Committee majority draft explanatory statement.
c. Corporate support includes facilities and infrastructure, program direction, and strategic programs.

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