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Contact: Dain Hansen
(202) 445-7514
dain.hansen@iapmo.org

U.S. Senate Passes Energy Bill With IAPMO Lobbied WaterSense and Energy-Water Nexus Language

Washington, D.C. (April 22, 2016) — The United States Senate this week passed a comprehensive energy bill, its first in nearly nine years, including sections lobbied for by IAPMO — a provision authorizing the U.S. EPA's WaterSense® program and the Nexus of Energy and Water for Sustainability Act (NEWS Act).

The Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, which addresses such wide-ranging issues as the federal approval for liquefied natural gas exports, the approval process for electric transmission lines, increasing cybersecurity protections for the electricity grid, and the licensing process for hydropower projects, passed by a vote of 85-12. The Senate will now look to conference with the House of Representatives to work out differences between S. 2012 and similar legislation in the House.

The text of S. 2012 can be found here: <https://www.congress.gov/114/bills/s2012/BILLS-114s2012es.pdf>

The two priority provisions for The IAPMO Group are:

- Sec. 1023 of the bill further emboldens the WaterSense program, which identifies and promotes water-efficient products through voluntary labeling in effort to reduce water use, reduce the strain on public water system infrastructure, conserve energy needed to pump, heat, transport, and treat water, and preserve water resources for future generations.
- Sec. 4101 establishes an Interagency Coordination Committee, co-chaired by the Secretaries of Energy and the Interior, to identify all relevant energy-water nexus activities across the federal government and enhance coordination of research and development activities among agencies.

WaterSense authorization and the NEWS Act were championed by IAPMO and the High-Performance Buildings Coalition (HPBC), which is chaired by IAPMO's Senior Vice President of Government Relations Dain Hansen, before S. 2012 was introduced in July 2015.

"As an industry, we have worked with the House and Senate for years to obtain enough support to officially authorize the WaterSense program," Hansen said. "However, this is the first time the Senate and the House have passed WaterSense authorization programs in the same congressional session — allowing for the bills to be negotiated and potentially sent to President Obama. It is clearly evident, even with the highly charged partisan environment, the one issue on which people are coming together is water. WaterSense and the NEWS Act mark a major victory for the industry and the country as a whole."

IAPMO R&T is the leading provider of WaterSense product certification in the nation and has been a U.S. EPA licensed provider, accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), since 2007, certifying the first high-efficiency toilet (HET) to the standard in April of that year. To date, IAPMO R&T, part of The IAPMO Group, has certified thousands of such water-efficient products to the WaterSense specifications.

"WaterSense labeling gives consumers the power to make informed choices that can help conserve water and lower their utility bills," said Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH), longtime WaterSense champion. "I'm pleased that the Senate, along with active stakeholders like the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, has moved to support this important program and the American manufacturers developing high-quality water-efficient products."

For more information on the legislation, contact Hansen at (202) 445-7514 or dain.hansen@iapmo.org.