

Federal Support for Utility Workforce Development Efforts

1 Electric utilities face considerable challenges in securing and training an adequate workforce.
2 Technological advances, the aging workforce, and demographics pose challenges in recruiting, training,
3 and retaining a skilled workforce to meet the rapidly changing demands of the electric utility sector.
4 These problems are even more challenging for smaller public power utilities that lack the recruitment and
5 training resources of larger investor-owned utilities.

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7 Congress has considered numerous efforts to address the growing need of the energy sector. Most
8 recently in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that was signed into law on November 15, 2021,
9 Congress directed the Department of Energy (DOE) to establish a “21st Century Energy Workforce
10 Advisory Board” to develop a strategy for DOE to support the development of a skilled energy
11 workforce. One of the criteria for individuals to be appointed to the Advisory Board is “expertise in
12 energy workforce development or apprenticeship programs of States or units of local government.”
13 Efforts focused on expanding the pool of skilled workers is an integral step in addressing the workforce
14 needs of the electric utility sector. Public power utilities, with unique ties to their local communities,
15 support these efforts and are eager to participate in new and expanded programs.

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17 There is also a significant need for continuing education for existing employees to ensure they acquire
18 and maintain the skills needed to meet the growing technological demands of the industry. For smaller
19 utilities, the local training opportunities can be scarce, and the cost to acquire needed training prohibitive.

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21 Authorizing local governmental agency access to federal workforce training resources for continuing
22 education efforts would provide critically needed resources to ensure public power utilities can meet the
23 growing demands of a rapidly evolving industry.

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25 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** That the American Public Power Association (APPA)
26 applauds the recognition of the need for expertise in energy workforce development or apprenticeship
27 programs of states or units of local government as one of the qualifications to serve on the 21st Century
28 Energy Workforce Advisory Board, a criterion for which public power utilities have unique expertise;

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30 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That APPA supports efforts to expand workforce training
31 opportunities and resources for the electric utility sector, including efforts aimed at K-12, vocational, and
32 college education and training;

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34 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That APPA urges Congress and the federal government to ensure the
35 eligibility of local governmental entities in the workforce activities anticipated under any legislation, new
36 programs, or recommendations; and

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38 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That APPA calls on Congress and the federal government to ensure
39 continuing education and apprenticeship programs for electric utility employees are eligible to receive
40 federal workforce development funding and support.

Adopted at the Legislative & Resolutions Committee Meeting

March 1, 2022

Sunsets in March 2030