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The Senate passed their fiscal year (FY) 2017 Energy and Water Development appropriations bill this May. The House, however, was unable to pass its version of the bill due to a controversial rider on LGBT rights included within it.

The bills, which provide funding for the Department of Energy (DOE), show a stark contrast in funding priorities between the House and Senate. Although both bills provide modest increases for DOE—a 0.8 percent increase from the House, and a 3.4 percent increase from the Senate—the House bill cuts the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) by almost 12 percent, whereas the Senate bill includes a small increase for EERE compared to FY 2016 levels.

Within EERE, the House bill would cut Geothermal (-21.1 percent), Hydrogen & Fuel Cell Technology (-3.9 percent), Solar (-18.5 percent), Water Power (-21.4 percent), and Wind (-5.7 percent). Although the Senate version of the bill would also cut Geothermal (-0.7 percent), Hydrogen & Fuel Cell Technology (-8.8 percent), Solar (-7.9 percent), and Wind (-16.1 percent), it would provide a 20 percent increase to Water Power.

Additionally, the House bill would provide a more than 2 percent increase to Fossil Energy Research and Development (FER&D), whereas the Senate bill would keep FER&D flat.

Both bills would keep funding for DOE'S Office of Science flat compared to FY 2016 levels.

The House still needs to approve its version of the bill, and the two bills still need to be conferenced and re-approved before they can become law.

Sources: House Appropriations Committee, Senate Appropriations Committee
