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WASHINGTON, D.C. - The House Energy and Commerce Committee approved legislation authored by Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, to promote greater energy efficiency in the operation of private and government data centers.

"Data centers are vitally important because they enable us to communicate and share information. As we increasingly rely on information technology, the energy consumption and costs of operating data centers are becoming bigger factors," Eshoo said. "This legislation will enable the growing information technology sector and the federal government to operate data centers more efficiently."

Eshoo's legislation improves data center efficiency by creating a voluntary national information program to disseminate information about energy savings that can be achieved in data centers.

A key function of the program will be the development of metrics and benchmarks by an outside entity with expertise in data center efficiency designated by the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The metrics and benchmarks will be adopted by the Energy STAR program and DOE Federal Energy Management Program to guide private consumers and the federal government in procurement decisions.

Eshoo's legislation was included as a provision in a broader energy bill marked-up by the Committee on Wednesday. The legislation builds on a 2006 law sponsored by Eshoo and Rep. Mike Rogers, D-Michigan, authorizing the EPA to conduct a study of data center efficiency.

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