Executive Summary: Energy, Meet the Internet
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The hottest area of business development in energy technologies lies in the integration of technology in energy delivery and production. More than just creating a dent in greenhouse gas emissions, innovative “IT energy” companies are making and attracting significant investments and redefining what we think of as an “energy company.”

Utilities are expected to invest nearly $200 billion over the next five years on improving and modernizing transmission and distribution infrastructure.¹ At the same time, venture capital investments in “IT energy” technologies have picked up 55% since 2009 and attracted $2 billion through 2011.² Using innovative software or new information to provide novel services or products, these companies make it easier to conserve or produce energy. A recent report estimates that harnessing existing data sources in the electric, oil, and gas sectors, if publicly available, could create $580 to $1,090 billion of annual value.³

The federal government can accelerate economic growth and energy savings in this sector, and not through the traditional role of funding or regulatory enforcement. Rather, updating rules to make energy information more transparent, more accessible, and more effectively managed can boost economic growth and improve energy efficiency.

Our report, “Energy, Meet the Internet,” divides policies into five categories: those that help create and manage more information, standardize and format information for easier exchange, enhance access to information, increase information transparency, and evaluate the use of information. Here are four of the ten proposed policies:

- DOE and the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) should continue working with industry partners to design open standards for smart grid devices and building controls systems.
- Congress should mandate that building owners be allowed to access the aggregate energy consumption information from their buildings.
- The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) should require energy audits or previous energy usage disclosure for federally insured mortgages.
- Congress should require all buildings over 25,000 square feet and all publicly owned or leased buildings to disclose their energy consumption.