



GEOHERMAL RISING POLICY
ENERGIZING OUR RENEWABLE FUTURE.

November 11, 2024

<p>The Honorable Bruce Westerman Chairman House Committee on Natural Resources 202 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515</p>	<p>The Honorable Raúl Grijalva Ranking Member House Committee on Natural Resources 1203 Longworth House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515</p>
<p>The Honorable Steve Scalise House Majority Leader 2049 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515</p>	<p>The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries House Minority Leader 2433 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515</p>

RE: Geothermal Rising’s Support of H.R. 7409, the “HEATS Act”

Dear Chairman Westerman, Ranking Member Grijalva, Majority Leader Scalise, Minority Leader Jeffries, and Honorable Members of the United States House of Representatives:

As the primary trade association for the geothermal industry in the United States, Geothermal Rising writes to express support for the bi-partisan “Harnessing Energy At Thermal Sources Act” or the “HEATS Act.” We recognize the leadership of Representative Kim (R-CA-40) for sponsoring the bill and Representatives Duarte (R-CA-13) and Peltola (D-AK) for co-sponsoring. We also commend the House Committee on Natural Resources for reporting the bill and all Members and staff who have participated and voted, thus far.

Regarding the potential of geothermal energy in America, the Department of Energy’s 2019 [GeoVision report](#) anticipated that geothermal energy could provide 60 GW of 24/7 clean, firm electricity by 2050 and their 2024 [Next-Generation Geothermal Power Commercial Liftoff report](#) later projected up to 90 GW. These reports highlighted the “unique value proposition” of geothermal energy, including minimal supply chain or workforce risk, low land use, and flexible generating capability. By shifting its generation to times when power is most valuable, geothermal energy can serve as a clean, baseload, renewable, and reliable resource, which will also free up American oil and gas for export revenue.

As discussed in the in the May 21, 2024, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources hearing [“to Examine the Opportunities, Risks, and Challenges Associated with Growth in Demand for Electric Power in the United States,”](#) there is already a massive market demand for clean, baseload power, and it is projected that this demand will continue to grow, especially with the rapid advancements of artificial intelligence (AI) and the need for data centers. Policy reforms will enable the private and public sectors to partner and develop America’s vast geothermal potential, ensuring an ample supply of reliable environmentally friendly electricity and heat for generations to come.

Geothermal energy is gaining bi-partisan traction in Congress, as it has great appeal to both sides of the aisle and to constituents of various backgrounds and ideologies. We largely commend the Congressional conduct and legislative work thus far, and respectfully urge continued collaboration, honest and constructive debate, and thoughtful compromises to advance our overlapping energy and environmental goals— which are fundamentally *American* interests.

Key provisions of the HEATS Act would accelerate responsible geothermal development by:

- Waiving federal drilling permits for geothermal activities on non-Federal land where the U.S. owns less than 50% of the subsurface geothermal resources, provided the operator has a State permit.
- Clarifying that geothermal exploration and production activities not be considered major Federal action under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for geothermal activities on non-Federal land where the U.S. owns less than 50% of the subsurface geothermal resources, provided the operator has a State permit, and will be exempt from additional Federal actions, including Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), unless certain historic preservation State laws are absent.

Geothermal Rising believes that geothermal energy development should be done responsibly and with careful consideration of environmental impacts. However, we believe that State measures are generally sufficient in most cases to ensure responsible and clean geothermal energy exploration and development, and that removing the Federal redundancies as outlined by the HEATS Act are reasonable and warranted. Therefore, we support the HEATS Act and urge the House to advance the bill.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Bryant Jones, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Geothermal Rising
www.geothermal.org