



# GEOTHERMAL RISING POLICY

## POWERING OUR RENEWABLE FUTURE.

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February 12, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann  
Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy  
and Water Development and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC, 20515

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy  
and Water Development and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC, 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Interim Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy  
and Water Development  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC, 20515

The Honorable John Kennedy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy  
and Water Development  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC, 20515

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Dear Chair Fleischmann, Interim Chair Murray, Ranking Member Kaptur, and Ranking Member Kennedy:

Geothermal Rising (GR) serves to build community and empower the geothermal industry by championing all geothermal technologies and applications. Geothermal Rising is a research organization, community organizer, and trade association representing the entire geothermal ecosystem, which includes geothermal heat pumps, direct use, and power production. Formed in 1972, GR is the oldest geothermal association on Earth, serving as the main professional, industry, and academic association for the geothermal community and public. GR empowers the advancement of human understanding and practical use of geothermal energy through collaboration and communication of robust research, education, knowledge, and guidance. Our vision is to use the Earth to save the Earth and to create a brighter future for Earth and all its inhabitants, powered by the planet itself.

As you and your colleagues prepare for a potential conference to develop a final appropriations bill for Energy and Water Development for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, Geothermal Rising writes to express appreciation for your support for the Department of Energy's (DOE) Geothermal Technologies Office (GTO). We encourage you to maintain, at a minimum, the \$118 million GTO topline provided by both the House and Senate marks in the final FY2024 appropriation, and to provide additional funding for geothermal research, development and demonstration activities across DOE by the same amount in next year's appropriations cycle. This funding will play a key role in spurring the innovation that transforms thermal resources across our country into clean, reliable and secure American electricity.

DOE spearheads our national efforts to develop geothermal technologies, which make electricity from underground thermal resources, the heat beneath our feet. These technologies can be a key part of the American electricity mix of the future, providing baseload power, creating jobs and strengthening American energy security and grid resilience. As GTO's 2019 GeoVision report put it, geothermal is an "always-on source of secure, reliable, and flexible domestic energy that can be utilized across industrial, commercial, and residential sectors."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/eere/geothermal/geovision>



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## POWERING OUR RENEWABLE FUTURE.

There is vast potential to strengthen our domestic energy security through geothermal technologies using the resources we have here at home. GeoVision projected that American geothermal generation capacity could expand more than 15-fold, reaching over 60 GW by 2050 and supplying 8.5 percent of total U.S. electricity generation.<sup>2</sup>

In January 2023, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory issued a report that added 230 GW of readily accessible potential capacity to the original GeoVision projection, reflecting recent technological advances in Enhanced Geothermal Systems (EGS) that are unlocking shallower, cooler and more economic geothermal resources.<sup>3</sup> In addition to EGS, other geothermal innovations, such as closed-loop systems, thermal energy networks, and superhot rock energy, continue to expand geothermal energy's potential as a significant resource for the U.S. energy system. Geothermal projects create reliable, well-paying jobs. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL) JEDI model has estimated each new geothermal plant creates tens of thousands of construction and operational jobs, including many positions at sites based in rural areas.

Robust funding for DOE's geothermal research, development, and demonstration activities, across GTO and the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED), is critical to translate the promise identified in these nonpartisan technical assessments into reality. In its FY2024 request, the Biden Administration requested \$216 million for GTO, and the Energy Act of 2020 (P.L.116-260) authorized \$170 million for GTO. But, congressional appropriations have lagged significantly below these amounts. Beyond GTO, Congress has not provided funding to OCED to support the large-scale demonstration projects that are necessary to facilitate commercialization of cutting-edge American geothermal technologies.

Congress's investments in American geothermal innovation will provide substantial and important return on federal investment by facilitating faster commercialization of 24/7 clean, firm, dispatchable electricity at a time when electricity demand will continue to increase. For these reasons, we encourage you to maintain, at a minimum, the \$118 million provided by the marks in a FY 2024 conference, and to provide additional support in next year's cycle.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you to bring innovative geothermal technologies to market.

Sincerely,

Bryant Jones  
Executive Director  
Geothermal Rising  
[www.geothermal.org](http://www.geothermal.org)  
+1 (530) 758-2360  
[bryant@geothermal.com](mailto:bryant@geothermal.com)

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/eere/geothermal/geovision>