



## Renewable Geothermal Permitting Bill Clears House Natural Resources Cmte

**Washington, DC – Wednesday, January 17, 2024** – The House Committee on Natural Resources passed several bills out of the Committee today, including geothermal legislation: [H.R. 6474](#), introduced by Reps. Michelle Steel (R-CA) and Susie Lee (D-NV). This bill would amend the *Energy Policy Act of 2005* to include geothermal as a categorical exclusion under the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA). The categorical exclusion currently applies to certain exploration and development activities for oil and gas on federal lands.

“In 2005, the U.S. was in an energy crisis and rightly granted oil and gas a categorical exclusion to produce more energy to meet demand. We may be approaching a new crisis if we don’t start producing more clean power to meet energy demand, and this bill helps achieve parity for 24/7, renewable geothermal,” said **Rich Powell, CEO of ClearPath Action**. “This legislation is important in unlocking American geothermal energy to support our economy and the environment.”

“Supporting the rise of reliable, clean, sustainable energy must start with employing an all-of-the-above energy approach,” said **Congresswoman Steel**. “This bill will help unleash American energy independence by ensuring geothermal energy can be developed more easily in the United States, creating jobs and boosting the economies of cities and small towns, including those in California. I am grateful to Chairman Westerman (R-AR) and Rep. Lee for their support of this important legislation that will benefit our energy grid across the board.”

Enhanced geothermal system (EGS) projects use existing drilling technology from the oil and gas industry to unlock new forms of geothermal resources. This technology has been categorically excluded from NEPA for certain oil and gas activities on federal lands since the *Energy Policy Act of 2005*.

Absent the reforms from H.R. 6474, geothermal energy projects can require as many as six separate NEPA reviews. NEPA reviews that result in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) require an average of 4.5 years to complete, but due to litigation and lack of coordination, some reviews can take [10 or more years](#).

Geothermal also provides emissions-free heat and power with the highest capacity factor of any renewable energy source. It does so while maintaining a small land footprint, which is an increasingly valuable trait as [large-scale renewable energy siting runs into headwinds](#).

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ClearPath Action has endorsed this [legislation](#).

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**About ClearPath Action**

ClearPath Action 501(c)(4) advocates for more clean energy innovation, modernized permitting and regulatory reform, America's global competitiveness for manufacturing, and unlocking more American resources — solutions drawn from our friends at ClearPath. Learn more at [clearpathaction.org](http://clearpathaction.org). Follow us on Twitter: @ClearPathAction, @powellrich