



STREAMLINING THERMAL ENERGY THROUGH ADVANCED MECHANISMS ACT OR STEAM ACT (S. 456 & H.R. 1077)

WHAT:

H.R. 1077/S. 456, the Streamlining Thermal Energy through Advanced Mechanisms (STEAM) Act, expands the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to include geothermal energy under the existing categorical exclusion for certain oil & gas activities for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews. This change removes unnecessary permitting delays, allowing geothermal exploration and development to progress in line with its well-understood environmental impact. Next-generation geothermal energy technologies use drilling technology similar to oil and gas projects, which already benefit from this exclusion. The STEAM Act eliminates regulatory disparity by ensuring both geothermal and oil and gas applications of drilling technology undergo the same permitting process. This bill will unlock geothermal resources, enhance grid reliability, lower energy costs and cement American energy leadership.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Geothermal is a proven 24/7 clean energy source with a smaller land footprint than other energy sources. The U.S. has over [70,000 GW of geothermal potential](#), but permitting delays stall projects and drive up costs. Enhanced Geothermal Systems (EGS) now leverage advanced oil and gas drilling technology, making them scalable with well-understood environmental risks. However, the average NEPA review takes 4.5 years, deterring investment and slowing innovation. While the Bureau of Land Management has established a categorical exclusion for geothermal exploration it remains vulnerable to administrative changes. The STEAM Act ensures long-term permitting certainty, preventing policy shifts from delaying projects.

WHAT'S NEXT:

Congress must pass H.R. 1077 and S. 456 to harness America's geothermal potential. By streamlining permitting for geothermal projects, we can accelerate energy deployment, enhance grid resilience, create jobs and keep energy costs low.

ORIGINAL SPONSORS:

H.R.1077
REP. SUSIE LEE (D-NV)

S. 456
SEN. CATHERINE CORTEZ-MASTO (D-NV)

COSPONSORS:

H.R.1077
REP. CELESTE MALOY (R-UT)

S. 456
SEN. LISA MURKOWSKI (R-AK)

SUPPORT:

CLEARPATH ACTION

CONGRESS.GOV LINK: [H.R.1077](#) AND [S.456](#)