

Union Calendar No. 569

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 398

[Report No. 119–655]

To amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to provide cost-recovery
authority for the Department of the Interior.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 14, 2025

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Natural Resources

MAY 20, 2026

Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union
and ordered to be printed

A BILL

To amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to provide cost-recovery authority for the Department of the Interior.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Geothermal Cost-Re-
5 covery Authority Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. COST RECOVERY FROM GEOTHERMAL LEASING,**
7 **PERMITTING, AND INSPECTIONS.**

8 Section 6 of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30
9 U.S.C. 1005) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
10 lowing:

11 “(j) COST RECOVERY.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—During the period that be-
13 gins on the date of enactment of this subsection and
14 ends September 30, 2032, the Secretary may require
15 an applicant for, or a holder of, a geothermal lease
16 to reimburse the United States for all reasonable ad-
17 ministrative and other costs incurred by the United
18 States from—

19 “(A) processing the application for the
20 geothermal lease, including any application for
21 an operations plan, geothermal drilling permit,
22 utilization plan, site license, facility construc-
23 tion permit, commercial use permit, and any
24 other approval associated with a geothermal
25 lease; and

1 “(B) inspecting and monitoring—
2 “(i) geophysical exploration activities;
3 “(ii) the drilling, plugging, and abandon-
4 donment of wells; and
5 “(iii) the construction, operation, ter-
6 mination, and reclamation of any well site
7 or facility for the utilization of geothermal
8 resources pursuant to the geothermal
9 lease.

10 “(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining wheth-
11 er to require reimbursement under paragraph (1),
12 the Secretary shall consider whether there is in ex-
13 istence a cooperative cost share agreement between
14 the United States and the holder of a geothermal
15 lease.

16 “(3) ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary may re-
17 duce the amount to be reimbursed under paragraph
18 (1) if the Secretary determines—

19 “(A) that full reimbursement would impose
20 an economic hardship on the applicant; or

21 “(B) that a less than full reimbursement is
22 necessary to promote the greatest use of geo-
23 thermal resources.

24 “(4) USE.—The amounts reimbursed under this
25 subsection shall be credited to the currently applica-

1 ble appropriation, account, or fund of the Depart-
2 ment of the Interior as discretionary offsetting col-
3 lections, and shall be available only to the extent
4 provided in advance in appropriations Acts for—

5 “(A) processing the application for geo-
6 thermal leases, including any application for op-
7 erations plans, geothermal drilling permits, uti-
8 lization plans, site licenses, facility construction
9 permits, commercial use permits, and any other
10 approval associated with geothermal leases; and

11 “(B) inspecting and monitoring—

12 “(i) geophysical exploration activities;

13 “(ii) the drilling, plugging, and aban-
14 donment of wells; and

15 “(iii) the construction, operation, ter-
16 mination, and reclamation of any well site
17 or facility for the utilization of geothermal
18 resources pursuant to geothermal leases.”.

19 **SEC. 3. REPORT.**

20 (a) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date
21 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior,
22 in consultation with the geothermal industry and other
23 stakeholders, shall submit to the Committee on Natural
24 Resources of the House of Representatives and the Com-
25 mittee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate,

1 and make publicly available on the website of the Depart-
2 ment of the Interior, a report that includes—

3 (1) an assessment of how the amendments
4 made by section 2 of this Act affected the Bureau
5 of Land Management’s geothermal program;

6 (2) any recommendations for reauthorization of
7 section 6(j) of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970,
8 as added by this Act; and

9 (3) any other recommendations for updates to
10 such section and the Bureau of Land Management’s
11 geothermal program.

12 (b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the report re-
13 quired in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Interior shall
14 solicit facts or information from the geothermal industry
15 and other stakeholders.

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