

Union Calendar No. 674

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 5576

[Report No. 119-773]

To amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to promote timely exploration for geothermal resources under geothermal leases, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

Mr. FULCHER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

AUGUST 27, 2026

Additional sponsors: Ms. MALOY, Mr. KENNEDY of Utah, and Mr. BEGICH

AUGUST 27, 2026

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on September 26, 2025]

A BILL

To amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to promote timely exploration for geothermal resources under geothermal leases, and for other purposes.

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 “Enhancing Geothermal*
 5 *Production on Federal Lands Act”.*

6 **SEC. 2. GEOTHERMAL PRODUCTION ON FEDERAL LANDS.**

7 *The Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1001*
 8 *et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:*

9 **“SEC. 30. GEOTHERMAL EXPLORATION PROJECTS.**

10 “(a) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

11 “(1) *GEOTHERMAL EXPLORATION PROJECT.—*

12 *The term ‘geothermal exploration project’ means the*
 13 *drilling of a temperature gradient well, monitoring*
 14 *well, calibration well, or another geothermal explor-*
 15 *atory well, including construction or making im-*
 16 *provements for such activities, on lands for which the*
 17 *Secretary has issued a geothermal lease—*

18 “(A) *that is carried out by the holder of the*
 19 *lease;*

20 “(B) *for which—*

21 “(i) *the last cemented casing string has*
 22 *an outer diameter of less than 13³/₈ inches;*
 23 *and*

24 “(ii) *the total unreclaimed surface dis-*
 25 *turbance at any one time within the project*

1 *area is less than 8 acres, not including the*
2 *area of a permanent or temporary access*
3 *road;*

4 *“(C) that is completed in less than 180*
5 *days, including the removal of any surface infra-*
6 *structure from the project area; and*

7 *“(D) that requires the restoration of the*
8 *project area within 3 years of the date of first*
9 *exploration drilling to approximately the condi-*
10 *tion that existed at the time the project began,*
11 *unless the project area is subsequently used as*
12 *part of energy development under the lease.*

13 *“(2) COVERED ACTIVITY.—The term ‘covered ac-*
14 *tivity’ includes, with respect to exploration, develop-*
15 *ment, or production (including direct use) of geo-*
16 *thermal resources—*

17 *“(A) geotechnical investigations;*

18 *“(B) off-road travel in a right-of-way estab-*
19 *lished by Congress, granted by a Federal agency,*
20 *or included in a land use plan; and*

21 *“(C) construction, maintenance, realign-*
22 *ment, and repair of an existing permanent or*
23 *temporary access road within a right-of-way es-*
24 *tablished by Congress, granted by a Federal*
25 *agency, or included in a land use plan.*

1 “(b) *NON-MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION.*—Geothermal ex-
2 ploration projects and covered activities shall not be consid-
3 ered major Federal actions under section 102(2)(C) of the
4 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.
5 4332(2)(C)).

6 “(c) *REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE NOTICE.*—The holder
7 of a geothermal lease shall provide to the Secretary notice
8 of their intent to carry out a geothermal exploration project
9 at least 30 days before the start of drilling under the
10 project.”.

11 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

12 Congress finds that—

13 (1) pursuant to section 109 of the National En-
14 vironmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336c), as
15 amended by section 321(b) of the Fiscal Responsi-
16 bility Act of 2023 (Public Law 118–5), the Bureau of
17 Land Management announced on April 15, 2024, it
18 had adopted categorical exclusions from the Depart-
19 ment of the Navy and the United States Forest Serv-
20 ice for geothermal exploration; and

21 (2) if appropriately used, these categorical exclu-
22 sions are expected to expedite the review and approval
23 of geothermal exploration proposals on Bureau of
24 Land Management lands.

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