

**EXTENSION OF TIME TO COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN HYDROPOWER PROJECTS**

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1020) to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to extend the time period during which licensees are required to commence construction of certain hydropower projects.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1020

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF TIME TO COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN HYDROPOWER PROJECTS.**

(a) **DEFINITION OF COVERED PROJECT.**—In this section, the term “covered project” means a hydropower project with respect to which the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued a license before March 13, 2020.

(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF EXTENSION.**—Notwithstanding section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806), on the request of a licensee of a covered project, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission may, after reasonable notice and for good cause shown, extend in accordance with subsection (c) the period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of the covered project for not more than an additional 6 years beyond the 8 years authorized by that section.

(c) **PERIOD OF EXTENSION.**—An extension of time to commence construction of a covered project under subsection (b) shall—

(1) consist of not more than 3 consecutive 2-year periods;

(2) begin on the date on which the final extension of the period for commencement of construction granted to the licensee under section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) expires; and

(3) end on the date that is not more than 6 years after the latest date to which the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is authorized to extend the period for commencement of construction under that section.

(d) **REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.**—If the time period required under section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) to commence construction of a covered project expires after December 31, 2023, and before the date of enactment of this Act—

(1) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission may reinstate the license for the applicable project effective as of the date of expiration of the license; and

(2) the extension authorized under subsection (b) shall take effect on the date of that expiration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the legislation and to insert extraneous material on S. 1020.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1020, led by Senator DAINES and, in the House of Representatives, by Representative NEWHOUSE.

Hydropower is a critical part of our Nation's energy mix, supplying baseload power to approximately 30 million homes and businesses and accounting for 40 percent of our black start capacity.

S. 1020 authorizes the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC, to extend construction deadlines for critical hydropower projects licensed before March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted global supply chains and halted many projects.

Current law requires hydropower projects to commence construction within 10 years of receiving a license. This legislation allows FERC to authorize an additional 6 years for certain projects to ensure fully licensed infrastructure is not permanently halted, depriving Americans of reliable energy.

There are currently 37 projects, across 15 States, that are at risk of losing licenses without the passage of this bill providing additional construction time.

These projects in limbo would provide energy that is imperative to power our communities, win the artificial intelligence race, and lower electricity prices for consumers.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 1020, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1020, which will grant an extension to hydropower projects impacted by the COVID pandemic.

The Federal Power Act requires hydropower projects to start construction within 2 years of receiving a license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC. Subsequent amendments have allowed FERC to grant extensions of up to 8 years to a project's construction deadline.

While I think it makes sense to have a hydropower license expire if a project can't start construction within a decade of the license being issued, I recognize that the COVID pandemic and resulting supply chain issues wreaked havoc on the hydropower industry. Therefore, this bill would allow FERC to grant up to 6 additional years for projects whose licenses were issued prior to COVID to start construction and would allow FERC to reinstate the licenses of projects whose authorizations have since expired.

Madam Speaker, I will note that this authority is not a blank check to any developer with a license issued pre-COVID. The bill explicitly only allows FERC to grant an extension for good cause. I expect FERC to adhere to that restriction.

In addition, I will also note that while the House has been able to complete work on this bill, my colleagues from the Energy and Commerce Committee, Representatives SCHRIER and FULCHER, have another bill on hydropower, H.R. 3657, that has been sitting in the Senate for 9 months. I certainly hope our friends over in the Senate can pass that bill, which grants additional transparency into the hydropower licensing process as soon as possible.

Madam Speaker, in any case, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I close by saying, again, that our committee is always concerned about hydropower. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to talk on this very important bill.

As everybody who knows me knows, I am a huge fan of hydropower. The Pacific Northwest boasts some of the most abundant form of low-cost, carbon-free renewable baseload power in the country, and I want to see other parts of the country be able to enjoy the same kind of benefits that we do in the Pacific Northwest from hydropower.

That is why this legislation is so important. It will extend the deadline so that construction projects can commence because their licensing opportunities will be extended.

Our country needs this hydropower. We need all forms of power, but this, in particular, is something that will help us provide a critical role in meeting the growing demand that we see throughout our country.

As I said, this is baseload power. It is carbon-free. It is something that is important to everybody in the country to make sure that we are good stewards of our environment.

I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak in favor of an option that we have in front of us that potentially could provide 2.5 gigawatts more power in the near future, which will go a long ways in meeting the important demands that we have in our electrical future.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote “yes” on S. 1020, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1020.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

