



# Citizens' Climate Lobby

## **The Harnessing Energy at Thermal Sources (HEATS) Act H.R.7409**

The Harnessing Energy at Thermal Sources (HEATS) Act (H.R.7409), Introduced by Reps. Young Kim (CA-R) and John Duarte (CA-R) would speed up American geothermal energy production by streamlining infrastructure development and production.

### **Geothermal power**

Geothermal power has the potential to be a large source of clean power. Currently, geothermal power is equal to 0.4% of total U.S. utility-scale electricity generation. However, according to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the continental U.S. is capable of generating 100 GW of geothermal energy, enough to supply 10% of the U.S. energy needs.

Geothermal power plants emit about 99% less CO<sub>2</sub> than fossil fuel power plants with similar power outputs. Additionally, geothermal is a highly reliable baseload energy source capable of generating power 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, independent of weather conditions.

### **H.R.7409**

The HEATS Act would expedite geothermal energy production by clarifying that geothermal operators do not need a federal drilling permit for wells that are on state and private lands where the subsurface geothermal estate is less than 50% federal. While operators would be exempt from federal permitting requirements, they would still be subject to state permitting regulations. This clarification would mirror an exemption that currently exists for similar oil and gas projects.

### **Status**

H.R.7409 was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources. A legislative subcommittee hearing was held on the bill on March 6, 2024. The bill was also included in H.R. 1 that has passed the House.