

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 447

To provide compensation flexibility to address retention and hiring issues
at the Bonneville Power Administration.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 15, 2025

Ms. PEREZ (for herself and Mr. NEWHOUSE) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To provide compensation flexibility to address retention and
hiring issues at the Bonneville Power Administration.

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 “Reliability for Rate-
5 payers Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. COMPENSATION FLEXIBILITY TO ADDRESS RETEN-**
7 **TION AND HIRING ISSUES AT THE BONNE-**
8 **VILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION.**

9 Section 10 of the Act of August 20, 1937 (commonly
10 known as the “Bonneville Project Act of 1937”) (50 Stat.

1 736, chapter 720; 16 U.S.C. 832i), is amended by striking
2 the section designation and subsections (a) and (b) and
3 inserting the following:

4 **“SEC. 10. EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONNEL.**

5 “(a) EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION PROGRAM.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other
7 law, rule, regulation, or directive relating to the pay-
8 ment of Federal employees (other than chapter 83
9 of title 5, United States Code), the administrator
10 shall develop, implement, and, as appropriate, up-
11 date, based on the results of an annual review under
12 paragraph (4), a compensation plan that specifies
13 and fixes the compensation (including salary or any
14 other pay, bonuses, benefits, incentives, and any
15 other form of remuneration) for employees of the ad-
16 ministrator, including members of the Senior Execu-
17 tive Service (as defined in section 2101a of title 5,
18 United States Code).

19 “(2) INITIAL COMPENSATION PLAN.—

20 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year
21 after the date of enactment of the Reliability
22 for Ratepayers Act, the administrator shall, in
23 consultation with the Director of the Office of
24 Personnel Management, and subject to con-
25 firmation and approval by the Secretary of En-

ergy, which shall not be unreasonably withheld,
develop an initial compensation plan under
paragraph (1).

“(B) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 1
year after the date on which the initial com-
pensation plan is developed under subparagraph
(A), the administrator shall implement the ini-
tial compensation plan.

“(3) REQUIREMENTS.—A compensation plan
developed under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) be based on an annual survey of the
prevailing compensation for similar positions in
the public sectors of the electric industry;

“(B) be consistent with the approved an-
nual general and administrative budget of the
administrator and encourage the widest diversi-
fied use of electric power at the lowest possible
rates to consumers consistent with sound busi-
ness principles;

“(C) provide that education, experience,
level of responsibility, geographic differences,
and retention and recruitment needs are to be
taken into account in determining the com-
pensation of employees of the administrator;
and

1 “(D) provide that the individual total com-
2 pensation of the administrator and any em-
3 ployee of the administrator shall be comparable
4 to and competitive with similar positions among
5 consumer-owned utilities in the Western Inter-
6 connection.

7 “(4) ANNUAL REVIEW.—

8 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Annually, the admin-
9 istrator shall review and update, as appropriate,
10 the compensation plan developed under para-
11 graph (1).

12 “(B) COMPENSATION OF THE ADMINIS-
13 TRATOR.—Notwithstanding any other law, rule,
14 regulation, or directive relating to the payment
15 of the administrator (other than chapter 83 of
16 title 5, United States Code), the Secretary shall
17 periodically review and update, as appropriate,
18 the compensation of the administrator con-
19 sistent with paragraph (3)(D).

20 “(C) PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION.—
21 The administrator shall include in the quarterly
22 public business review of the administrator or
23 any other appropriate public review of the oper-
24 ations and finances of the administrator infor-
25 mation on the applicable annual compensation

1 plan review under subparagraph (A), including
2 information on the amount of salaries of any
3 employees whose annual salaries would exceed
4 the annual rate payable for positions at Level
5 IV of the Executive Schedule under section
6 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

7 “(5) ANNUAL PUBLICATION.—Annually, the ad-
8 ministrator shall publish the compensation plan de-
9 veloped under paragraph (1) or updated under para-
10 graph (4), as applicable.

11 “(b) APPOINTMENT; EMPLOYMENT.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The administrator may, as
13 the administrator determines to be necessary to
14 carry out this Act, subject to applicable civil service
15 laws—

16 “(A) appoint any officers and employees;

17 “(B) employ laborers, mechanics, and
18 workers for construction work or the operation
19 and maintenance of electrical facilities; and

20 “(C) fix the compensation of individuals
21 appointed under subparagraph (A) or (B), re-
22 spectively, consistent with the applicable com-
23 pensation plan developed under subsection
24 (a)(1).

1 “(2) EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN CIVIL SERVICE
2 LAWS.—In carrying out the authority provided by
3 paragraph (1), the administrator shall be exempt
4 from chapters 34, 43, 51, 53, 57, and 59 of title 5,
5 United States Code.

6 “(3) APPLICATION OF MERIT SYSTEM PRIN-
7 CIPLES.—Employees of the administrator are sub-
8 ject to the application of the merit system principles
9 set forth in section 2301 of title 5, United States
10 Code, to the extent that the principles apply to a
11 wholly owned Government corporation.

12 “(4) EMPLOYMENT OF PHYSICIANS.—The ad-
13 ministrator may employ physicians, without regard
14 to the civil service laws (including regulations), to
15 perform physical examinations of employees of the
16 administrator or prospective employees of the ad-
17 ministrator who are or may become laborers, me-
18 chanics, and workers described in paragraph (1)(B).

19 “(5) EMPLOYMENT OF EXPERTS.—The admin-
20 istrator may appoint, without regard to the civil
21 service laws (including regulations), any experts that
22 the administrator determines to be necessary to
23 carry out the functions of the administrator under
24 this Act.”.

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