

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7568

To establish programs and requirements related to the production of geothermal energy in the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 13, 2026

Mr. AUCHINCLOSS (for himself and Mr. AMODEI of Nevada) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, and Education and Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish programs and requirements related to the production of geothermal energy in the United States, 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 “Hot Rock Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

6 In this Act:

7 (1) **GEOHERMAL ENERGY.**—The term “geo-
8 thermal energy” has the meaning given such term in

1 section 45(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of
2 1986.

3 (2) GEOTHERMAL RESERVOIR.—The term “geo-
4 thermal reservoir” means an underground reservoir
5 containing a geothermal resource or deposit, whether
6 the fluids in the reservoir are native to the reservoir
7 or flow into or are injected into the reservoir.

8 (3) HOT DRY ROCK.—The term “hot dry rock”
9 means a superhot geothermal resource or supercrit-
10 ical geothermal resources that exists within rocks
11 that have little to no natural permeability.

12 (4) HOT DRY ROCK GEOTHERMAL PROJECT.—
13 The term “hot dry rock geothermal project” means
14 the combined surface and subsurface facilities used
15 to produce electricity or industrial heat from hot dry
16 rock using a next-generation geothermal system.

17 (5) NEXT-GENERATION GEOTHERMAL SYS-
18 TEM.—The term “next-generation geothermal sys-
19 tem” means a geothermal reservoir system that is
20 engineered, as opposed to occurring naturally.

21 (6) SUPERCRITICAL GEOTHERMAL RE-
22 SOURCE.—The term “supercritical geothermal re-
23 source” means a geothermal resource or deposit
24 that—

1 (A) consists of natural heat stored in rocks
 2 or in an aqueous liquid or vapor (whether or
 3 not under pressure); and

4 (B) exists at a temperature equal to or
 5 greater than 375 degrees Celsius.

6 (7) SUPERHOT GEOTHERMAL RESOURCE.—The
 7 term “superhot geothermal resource” means a geo-
 8 thermal resource or deposit that—

9 (A) consists of natural heat stored in rocks
 10 or in an aqueous liquid or vapor (whether or
 11 not under pressure); and

12 (B) exists at a temperature—

13 (i) equal to 300 degrees Celsius or
 14 374 degrees Celsius; or

15 (ii) between 300 degrees Celsius and
 16 374 degrees Celsius.

17 **SEC. 3. HOT DRY ROCK GEOTHERMAL ENERGY RESEARCH,**
 18 **TESTING, DEVELOPMENT, AND DEMONSTRA-**
 19 **TION.**

20 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
 21 gress that the programs in this section should—

22 (1) effectively address the scientific and engi-
 23 neering challenges with regard to developing—

24 (A) cost-competitive hot dry rock geo-
 25 thermal projects; and

1 (B) the hot dry rock geothermal energy in-
2 dustry in the United States; and

3 (2) support the development of a pathway to
4 producing hot dry rock geothermal energy on a com-
5 mercial scale.

6 (b) RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAMS.—

7 (1) HIGH-TEMPERATURE COMPLETIONS RE-
8 SEARCH, TESTING, AND DEVELOPMENT.—The Sec-
9 retary shall establish a grant program to award
10 amounts to eligible entities to research, test, and de-
11 velop high-temperature completions, including—

12 (A) the research and testing of high-tem-
13 perature water-rock casings, cements, stimula-
14 tion tools, and geochemistry; and

15 (B) the testing and development of high-
16 temperature casing and completions.

17 (2) HIGH-TEMPERATURE AND HIGH-PRESSURE
18 SENSING EQUIPMENT DEVELOPMENT.—The Sec-
19 retary shall establish a grant program to award
20 amounts to eligible entities—

21 (A) to develop high-temperature and high-
22 pressure sensing equipment; and

23 (B) to support the development of equip-
24 ment that can be used for screening, moni-
25 toring, and characterizing the subsurface in an

1 environment of extreme depths, temperatures,
2 and pressures.

3 (3) SUPERCRITICAL FLUID PROPERTIES RE-
4 SEARCH AND TESTING.—The Secretary shall estab-
5 lish a grant program to award amounts to eligible
6 entities to research and test the properties of super-
7 critical fluids, fluid flow, fluid-rock interactions, and
8 fluid assurance characterization.

9 (4) HIRING AND STAFFING.—The Secretary
10 shall establish a program to increase staffing rel-
11 evant to the grant programs established under para-
12 graphs (1) through (3) and to contract with sci-
13 entists to assist with the research, testing, and tech-
14 nological development associated with the grant pro-
15 grams established under paragraphs (1) through (3).

16 (5) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant
17 under paragraph (1), (2), or (3), an eligible entity
18 shall submit to the Secretary an application in such
19 form, at such time, and containing such information
20 as the Secretary determines appropriate.

21 (6) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
22 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
23 retary to carry out the grant programs established
24 under this subsection \$16,000,000 for each of fiscal
25 years 2027 through 2031.

1 (c) FRONTIER OBSERVATORY AND TESTING SITE
2 FOR HOT DRY ROCK GEOTHERMAL ENERGY TECH-
3 NOLOGY PROGRAM.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
5 a program for eligible entities to construct a field re-
6 search site—

7 (A) to test, experiment with, and dem-
8 onstrate hot dry rock geothermal projects, in-
9 cluding drilling completion, reservoir creation,
10 flow testing, and production characteristics; and

11 (B) to provide an advanced and well-
12 resourced facility with access to a site with re-
13 quired geology, as determined by the Secretary,
14 including lithology, composition, and tempera-
15 ture and depth gradients.

16 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
17 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
18 retary to carry out this subsection \$40,000,000 for
19 each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031.

20 (d) HOT DRY ROCK GEOTHERMAL ENERGY SYSTEMS
21 RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND DEMONSTRATION AC-
22 TIVITIES.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
24 a program to support research, development, and
25 demonstration activities and facility operations of el-

1 igible entities to provide solutions to challenges to
2 the establishment of a commercial hot dry rock geo-
3 thermal project, including the following:

4 (A) The technical feasibility of subsurface
5 infrastructure for supercritical fluids.

6 (B) Geothermal reservoir management and
7 thermal drawdown research.

8 (C) Advanced deep drilling methods, which
9 includes—

10 (i) researching, developing, and dem-
11 onstrating energy-based drilling and novel
12 drilling methods;

13 (ii) researching thermal physical prop-
14 erties of rock at extreme temperatures and
15 pressure conditions; and

16 (iii) researching the crustal stress and
17 geomechanics for drilling performed during
18 hot dry rock geothermal projects.

19 (D) Proppant research for fracture sys-
20 tems in hot dry rock geothermal projects.

21 (E) Wellbore integrity and construction.

22 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

23 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
24 retary to carry out this subsection \$16,000,000 for
25 each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031.

1 (e) MILESTONE-BASED DEVELOPMENT GRANT PRO-
2 GRAM.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
4 a grant program to award set amounts to eligible
5 entities that demonstrate the achievement of a pro-
6 gram milestone described in paragraph (2) to sup-
7 port the development by such eligible entities of—

8 (A) wells that reach supercritical tempera-
9 tures;

10 (B) processes that bring supercritical
11 fluids to the surface; and

12 (C) techniques to harness geothermal en-
13 ergy.

14 (2) PROGRAM MILESTONE.—A program mile-
15 stone includes the following activities conducted with
16 the use of a covered technology as part of a hot dry
17 rock geothermal project:

18 (A) Drilling at different depths, tempera-
19 tures, and pressures.

20 (B) Geothermal reservoir creation.

21 (C) Steam production (to measure well
22 flow over time).

23 (D) Power production of increasing size.

24 (E) Other supporting activities, includ-
25 ing—

1 (i) converting a coal plant to accept
2 steam from a hot dry rock geothermal en-
3 ergy powerplant;

4 (ii) energy-based drilling for accessing
5 depths, temperatures, and pressures pre-
6 viously inaccessible with conventional drill-
7 ing technology; and

8 (iii) stimulation for hot dry rock res-
9 ervoir creation.

10 (3) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant
11 under this subsection, an eligible entity shall submit
12 to the Secretary an application in such form, at such
13 time, and containing such information as the Sec-
14 retary determines appropriate.

15 (4) COVERED TECHNOLOGY DEFINED.—In this
16 subsection, the term “covered technology” means—

17 (A) a system for steerable drilling at tem-
18 peratures and pressures relevant to geothermal
19 energy production;

20 (B) a system for cost-effective and efficient
21 thermoelectric conversion;

22 (C) a method for using working fluids
23 other than water;

24 (D) a new method for casing wells, appli-
25 cable to geothermal energy production;

1 (E) a system for deep drilling, including
2 through basement rock;

3 (F) a method for geothermal reservoir cre-
4 ation in the brittle-ductile transition zone of the
5 crust of the Earth;

6 (G) a method for increasing the surface
7 area or heat transfer rate of a next-generation
8 geothermal system; or

9 (H) any other technology determined nec-
10 essary by the Secretary for achieving a program
11 milestone described in paragraph (2).

12 (5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

13 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
14 retary to carry out this subsection \$30,000,000 for
15 each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031.

16 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
18 ty” means—

19 (A) a National Laboratory;

20 (B) an institution of higher education (as
21 such term is defined in section 102(a) of the
22 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
23 1002(a))); or

24 (C) a private entity.

1 (2) PROPPANT.—The term “proppant” means
2 particles mixed with fluids designed to keep an in-
3 duced fracture open after stimulation.

4 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
5 the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Geo-
6 thermal Technologies Office of the Department of
7 Energy.

8 **SEC. 4. HOT DRY ROCK GEOTHERMAL ENERGY RISK RE-**
9 **SEARCH AND MONITORING.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
11 date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall
12 establish—

13 (1) a research program to study the—

14 (A) seismicity and rock mechanics in the
15 brittle-ductile transition zone; and

16 (B) thermal property of rocks, including
17 rock conductivity, fluid heat capacity, rock heat
18 capacity, specific heat capacity, and seismicity,
19 with an emphasis on the characterization im-
20 pact of hot dry rock geothermal energy;

21 (2) a program to map deep basement rocks
22 within each of the several States, the District of Co-
23 lumbia, and each territory and possession of the
24 United States; and

1 (3) a program to monitor the ground water of
2 areas in the United States affected by the testing
3 and demonstration of technologies used in the devel-
4 opment of hot dry rock geothermal energy.

5 (b) SECRETARY DEFINED.—In this section, the term
6 “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior, acting
7 through the Director of the United States Geological Sur-
8 vey.

9 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
10 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
11 out this section \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027
12 through 2031.

13 **SEC. 5. WORKFORCE CROSS-TRAINING PROGRAM.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and
15 carry out a workforce training program under which the
16 Secretary shall enter into an agreement with at least 2
17 institutions of higher education (as such term is defined
18 in section 102(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965
19 (20 U.S.C. 1002(a))) to train covered individuals to work
20 in the geothermal energy industry.

21 (b) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the
22 program established under subsection (a), the Secretary
23 shall carry out the following activities:

1 (1) Offer classroom education, training, and ap-
2 prenticeship placements to covered individuals with
3 respect to the following areas:

4 (A) Geosciences.

5 (B) Geophysics.

6 (C) Computational sciences and engineer-
7 ing.

8 (D) Geological engineering.

9 (E) Mechanical engineering.

10 (F) Process engineering.

11 (G) Chemical engineering.

12 (H) Petroleum engineering.

13 (I) Drilling engineering.

14 (J) Civil engineering.

15 (K) Electrical engineering.

16 (2) Encourage participation by covered individ-
17 uals who are members of—

18 (A) a union; or

19 (B) an energy community.

20 (c) PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretary shall prioritize
21 the participation in the program established under sub-
22 section (a) of individuals who work in a role described in
23 subsection (d)(1)(C).

24 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—The term “covered
2 individual” means an individual who—

3 (A) is a citizen or legal permanent resident
4 of the United States;

5 (B) is an employee of or works as an inde-
6 pendent contractor for a company that is
7 headquartered in the United States; and

8 (C) works, prior to or at the time of their
9 enrollment in the program—

10 (i) in the oil and gas industry, includ-
11 ing as—

12 (I) a mechanical engineer;

13 (II) a drilling engineer;

14 (III) a reservoir engineer;

15 (IV) a petroleum engineer;

16 (V) an electrical engineer;

17 (VI) an oil rig worker; or

18 (VII) a geoscientist; or

19 (ii) as a technician, including as—

20 (I) a welder;

21 (II) a machinist;

22 (III) a pipefitter; or

23 (IV) an electrician.

24 (2) ENERGY COMMUNITY.—The term “energy
25 community” has the meaning given the term in sec-

1 tion 45(b)(11)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of
2 1986.

3 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
4 the Secretary of Labor.

5 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
6 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry
7 out this section \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027
8 through 2031.

9 **SEC. 6. STRENGTHENING FEDERAL AUTHORIZATION FOR**
10 **HOT DRY ROCK GEOTHERMAL PROJECTS.**

11 (a) HOT DRY ROCK GEOTHERMAL PROJECT EXPERT
12 PROGRAM.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy
14 shall establish and carry out a program to provide
15 to the regional and district offices of the Bureau of
16 Land Management and the Forest Service technical
17 assistance with respect to Federal authorizations for
18 hot dry rock geothermal projects, including research
19 and development related to hot dry rock geothermal
20 projects.

21 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
22 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
23 retary of Energy to carry out this subsection
24 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through
25 2031.

1 (b) CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION FOR EXPLORATION
2 AND CONFIRMATION OF HOT DRY ROCK GEOTHERMAL
3 ENERGY.—Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005
4 (42 U.S.C. 15942) is amended—

5 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “, or the
6 Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1001 et
7 seq.) for the purpose of exploration of geothermal re-
8 sources” after “or gas”; and

9 (2) in subsection (b)—

10 (A) in paragraph (2), by striking “or gas”
11 and inserting “, gas, or geothermal”; and

12 (B) in paragraph (3), by striking “or gas”
13 and inserting “, gas, or geothermal”.

14 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

15 (1) EXPERT.—The term “expert” means an in-
16 dividual who works or has worked in the energy sec-
17 tor and has expertise in disciplines including—

18 (A) drilling and completion, including cas-
19 ing and well interventions;

20 (B) geothermal field operations;

21 (C) rock mechanics;

22 (D) geophysics;

23 (E) exploration technology; or

24 (F) downhole technology, including packers
25 and wire line tools.

1 (2) FEDERAL AUTHORIZATION.—The term
2 “Federal authorization”—

3 (A) means any authorization required
4 under Federal law with respect to an activity on
5 the area of a lease issued under the Geothermal
6 Steam Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.);
7 and

8 (B) includes any authorization for siting,
9 drilling, underground injection, surface oper-
10 ations, and generation of energy under such a
11 lease.

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