

REP. YOUNG KIM STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

Thank you, Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Grijalva, for holding this markup.

I am excited to see H.R. 7409, the “Harnessing Energy At Thermal Sources Act” or the “HEATS Act” considered in today’s markup.

California is a top geothermal energy producer and is home to two of the largest geothermal reservoirs in the country. Despite the vast energy resources lying under our feet, the current permitting process has impeded progress in innovative geothermal projects that offer unlimited clean energy.

California has some of the most stringent permitting regulations in the United States. Currently, operators need to meet both State and Federal permitting regulations which is burdensome and prolongs the permitting process for years.

The HEATS Act would expedite geothermal energy production by removing the requirement that geothermal operators receive 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 are required to receive state permits and approval, they would be exempt from federal permitting

regulations like the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

There are also several key exceptions in place. The bill would not apply to tribal lands, has no effect on geothermal royalty payments to the federal government, and does not waive Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act if the state in which the geothermal activity is taking place does not have laws in place to protect historic properties and sites.

H.R. 7409 is commonsense, strengthens our energy portfolio, lowers emissions and costs for Americans, and promotes U.S. energy independence. Accelerating renewable geothermal energy production and deployment is a win for our economy, national security, and environment.

I thank the Committee for considering H.R. 7409 and Representative Duarte for co-leading this bill with me.

Thank you, and I yield back.