

REP. YOUNG KIM STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

Thank you, Chairman Stauber and Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez, for holding this hearing.

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

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 clean energy 24/7.

California has some of the most stringent permitting regulations in the United States. This means that operators often wait years to receive permits and approval to explore and develop geothermal projects.

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. Operators would be exempt from federal permitting regulations like the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA and Section 106 of

the National Historic Preservation Act, but they would still be subject to state permitting regulations. This lessens the burden on operators who currently need to meet both State and Federal permitting regulations.

There are also several important exceptions in place. The bill would not apply to Indian 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, expands our energy portfolio, reduces emissions, lowers 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.