

Union Calendar No. 566

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7422

[Report No. 118–670]

To amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to provide cost-recovery
authority for the Department of the Interior.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 20, 2024

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Natural Resources

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole
House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on February 20, 2024]

A BILL

To amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to provide cost-recovery authority for the Department of the Interior.

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 “Geothermal Cost-Recov-*
 5 *ery Authority Act of 2024”.*

6 **SEC. 2. COST RECOVERY FROM GEOTHERMAL LEASING AND**
 7 **PERMITTING.**

8 *Section 6 of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (30*
 9 *U.S.C. 1005) is amended by adding at the end the following:*

10 “(j) *COST RECOVERY.*—

11 “(1) *IN GENERAL.*—*During the period that be-*
 12 *gins on the date of enactment of this subsection and*
 13 *ends September 30, 2031, the Secretary may require*
 14 *a holder of a geothermal lease to reimburse the United*
 15 *States for all reasonable administrative and other*
 16 *costs incurred by the United States from—*

17 “(A) *processing the application for the geo-*
 18 *thermal lease, including any application for an*
 19 *operations plan, geothermal drilling permit, uti-*
 20 *lization plan, site license, facility construction*
 21 *permit, commercial use permit, and any other*
 22 *approval associated with a geothermal lease; and*

23 “(B) *monitoring—*

24 “(i) *geophysical exploration operations;*

1 “(ii) the drilling, plugging, and aban-
2 donment of wells; and

3 “(iii) the construction, operation, ter-
4 mination, and reclamation of any well site
5 or facility for the utilization of geothermal
6 resources pursuant to the geothermal lease.

7 “(2) *CONSIDERATIONS.*—In determining whether
8 to require reimbursement under paragraph (1), the
9 Secretary shall consider whether there is in existence
10 a contributed funds agreement between the United
11 States and the holder of a geothermal lease.

12 “(3) *ADJUSTMENTS.*—The Secretary may reduce
13 the amount to be reimbursed under paragraph (1) if
14 the Secretary determines—

15 “(A) that full reimbursement would impose
16 an economic hardship on the holder of the geo-
17 thermal lease; or

18 “(B) that a less than full reimbursement is
19 necessary to promote the greatest use of geo-
20 thermal resources.

21 “(4) *USE.*—The amounts reimbursed under this
22 subsection shall be available to the Secretary of the
23 Interior for expenditure for—

24 “(A) processing the application for the geo-
25 thermal lease, including any application for an

1 *operations plan, geothermal drilling permit, uti-*
2 *lization plan, site license, facility construction*
3 *permit, commercial use permit, and any other*
4 *approval associated with a geothermal lease; and*

5 “(B) monitoring—

6 “(i) geophysical exploration operations;

7 “(ii) the drilling, plugging, and aban-

8 *donment of wells; and*

9 “(iii) the construction, operation, ter-

10 *mination, and reclamation of any well site*

11 *or facility for the utilization of geothermal*

12 *resources pursuant to the geothermal lease.”.*

13 **SEC. 3. REPORT.**

14 (a) *REPORT.*—*Not later than 5 years after the date*
15 *of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall*
16 *submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House*
17 *of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Nat-*
18 *ural Resources of the Senate, and make publicly available*
19 *on the website of the Department of the Interior, a report*
20 *that includes—*

21 (1) *an assessment of how the amendments made*
22 *by section 2 of this Act affected the Bureau of Land*
23 *Management’s geothermal program, including the ac-*
24 *complishments of each field office relating to the co-*
25 *ordination and processing of geothermal permits and*

1 *any other approval associated with a geothermal*
2 *lease;*

3 *(2) any recommendations for reauthorization of*
4 *section 6(j) of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970, as*
5 *added by this Act; and*

6 *(3) any other recommendations for updates to*
7 *such section and the Bureau of Land Management's*
8 *geothermal program.*

9 *(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the report re-*
10 *quired in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Interior shall*
11 *solicit facts or information from the geothermal industry*
12 *and other stakeholders.*

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