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Bipartisan Hydropower Bills Streamline Red Tape to Create Jobs; Produce New, Clean Electricity

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power held a [legislative hearing](#) on [H.R. 678](#), the “*Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act*,” and [H.R. 254](#), the “*Bonneville Unit Clean Hydropower Facilitation Act*.” Both bills are bipartisan plans to create new American jobs and expand production of clean, renewable hydropower by cutting duplicative, bureaucratic red tape.

“These bills could increase our nation’s hydro-electric capacity by up to 150,000 kilowatts – or the equivalent generating capacity of the four hydro-electric dams on the Klamath River,” remarked Subcommittee on Water and Power Chairman Tom McClintock (CA-04). “They do so at no cost to taxpayers – indeed, these projects will produce millions of dollars of new revenue for taxpayers by leasing existing federal facilities.”

“At a time when our country needs to focus on domestic energy production and job creation, hydropower can play a critical role in providing clean, renewable electricity while expanding job opportunities in rural America. Hydropower is the cheapest and cleanest source of electricity available through modern technology. The only thing standing in the way of realizing the incredible potential of this readily available renewable energy source is the existing federal regulatory framework, which stifles development and entrepreneurship,” said Rep. Scott Tipton (CO-03.) “For this reason, I reintroduced this bipartisan legislation. The bill authorizes power development at the agency’s conduits to clear up multi-federal agency confusion and duplicative processes and reduces the regulatory costs associated with hydropower development.”

[Robert Lynch](#), who represents the Irrigation and Electrical Districts’ Association of Arizona explained *“Recent improvements and innovations in the development of small hydropower generating turbines have made the idea of installing multiple small turbines in these systems a potentially attractive source of electric energy,”* but *“One key to making this happen is to reduce bureaucratic process, and its associated costs.”* Lynch strongly supports Rep. Tipton’s legislation because *“There is an enormous amount of energy being wasted every day as water flows through these conduits to their ultimate destinations,”* that H.R. 678 will provide the ability to harness.

Chris Treese, Manager of External Affairs for the Colorado River Water Conservation District confirmed *“There are several entities in western Colorado that have rejected pursuing hydropower based solely on the time, resources, and risks associated with the current permitting process.”* Treese supports H.R. 678 because *“it will reduce costs and foster more conduit hydropower at federal facilities and...clarify issues of federal authority on these projects that will improve and streamline the decision-making processes.”*

“HR 254 is a win for federal taxpayers, the environment, and Utah electricity consumers. This bill allows for the development of hydropower that generates revenue for the federal treasury and electricity for consumers without any harmful impacts to the environment,” **said Rep. Jason Chaffetz (UT-03).**

[Calvin Crandall](#), President of Strawberry Water Users Association, testified in support of the H.R. 254 because *“the tremendous energy of falling project water is being wasted, in part as the result of federal red tape that produces illogical results. H.R. 254 will remove those barriers, allowing this clean renewable Diamond Fork energy to be developed which will produce not only power, but jobs.”*

[Gene Shawcroft](#), Assistant General Manager of the Central Utah Water Conservancy District, explained how H.R. 254 will, *“clear away...an economic roadblock to the development of clean hydropower in the Diamond Fork feature of the Bonneville Unit.”* Shawcroft told the Subcommittee that the *“District stands ready to initiate a process to apply for the right to develop clean hydropower at Diamond Fork”* once H.R. 254 becomes law.

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