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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov) | | April 20, 2016 | 202-224-6244 |   **Heller Energy and Mining Initiatives Pass Senate as Part of Energy Bill**  **(Washington, DC)** - Today, the United States Senate passed the [*Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015*](http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=legislation&id=87D9E1CF-1B96-4815-9D05-387798EFAEA7) *(S. 2012)*, a bipartisan energy bill f**ocused on addressing national energy opportunities and challenges, which included a variety of Heller provisions focused on Nevada’s job growth. The legislation implements policies that will save energy, increase domestic energy and mineral supplies, facilitate investment into critical infrastructure, improve grid security, and boost international trade.**  **“This bipartisan energy legislation focuses on energy efficiency, infrastructure, supply and accountability. From improving energy permitting processing, to cleaning up out-of-date regulations, to increasing and promoting geothermal and solar development, these reforms will directly affect Nevadans in a positive way. I want to thank Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell for their leadership to ensure passage of this energy bill,”** said Senator Heller**.**    **Background Information on Senator Heller’s Provisions Included in the Bill:**  ***Public Land Job Creation Act*** **(S.113)**   * [The Public Land Job Creation Act](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-114s113is/pdf/BILLS-114s113is.pdf), which [passed the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) in July 2015](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=5fd25d63-8bd6-4e43-8239-c6f16aa02233), streamlines the permitting process for mineral and energy development, while also preserving the time necessary for environmental analysis. Specifically, the provision provides the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service 45 days to complete the review process of permit notices. The entire Critical Minerals subtitle in S.2012 is based off the American Mineral Security Act of 2015 (S.883), of which Senator Heller is a cosponsor.   ***Geothermal Exploration Opportunities (GEO) Act*** **(S.562)**   * The [GEO Act](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=a7e6e0b8-827d-461f-ad4e-448243ea4d22), which [passed the ENR Committee in July 2015](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=5fd25d63-8bd6-4e43-8239-c6f16aa02233), promotes geothermal exploration activities on public lands so companies can test resources in Nevada and other western states. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) estimates nearly 90 percent of the geothermal energy potential in the nation is on federal lands. Under current rules, companies must go through a lengthy environmental review process just to see if a resource is viable, despite causing minimal surface disturbance. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) estimates that approval for exploration activities takes between 18 to 24 months.  That process serves as a significant impediment to the expansion of geothermal energy development across the West.   ***Heller-Heinrich-Risch-Tester-Gardner-Wyden-Bennet-Daines-Udall Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Amendment*(No. 3286)**   * This amendment improves permitting for utility-scale geothermal, wind and solar energy development on public lands. Given that over 85 percent of Nevada’s land is managed by the federal government, these reforms are important for the state to fully utilize its clean energy potential. This amendment is an updated version of bipartisan legislation Heller introduced earlier this year, [S.1407](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=175121c0-d21f-4321-980c-4dd6f861f425).   ***Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act of 2015* (Part of No. 3234)**   * Amendment No.3234, introduced by Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell, is a package of public lands bills that has been approved by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.  Senator Heller worked closely with them to push the bill through the Committee last year and include the provision in their amendment. * The *Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act of 2015, originally introduced by Senator Heller and Congressman Heck,*requires that a decision on issuing a permit for accessing public lands be provided to groups within 48 hours of application and that groups are not responsible for obtaining an insurance policy given they waive federal government liability.   ***Reed-Heller Energy Storage Amendment* (No. 2989)**   * This amendment authorizes the Secretary of Energy to coordinate efforts among the energy storage research and development programs and authorities at the Department of Energy (DOE). The DOE has several programs that allow for energy storage research and development, including the Grid Modernization Initiative, but these programs are not well coordinated. The Reed-Heller amendment improves S. 2012 by adding language that guides the Secretary of Energy to coordinate energy storage research and development programs.   [*Heller-Heinrich Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) Legislation*](file:///\\helle-wsh-fs01\share\Press\Press%20Releases\2016\April\Heller-Heinrich-Risch-Tester-Gardner-Wyden-Bennet-Daines-Udall%20Public%20Lands%20Renewable%20Energy%20Development%20Amendment%20(No.%203286))   * This legislation reauthorizes the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act. * Senator Heller and Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) introduced this bipartisan legislation in October of 2015. * Senator Heller worked closely with Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell to include this legislation in Amendment No. 3234. * More information can be found [here](file:///\\helle-wsh-fs01\share\Press\Press%20Releases\2016\April\Heller-Heinrich-Risch-Tester-Gardner-Wyden-Bennet-Daines-Udall%20Public%20Lands%20Renewable%20Energy%20Development%20Amendment%20(No.%203286)).     Click [HERE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCFU7IQT5vo) to watch Heller speak on his Comprehensive Energy Bill Priorities  ###  [cid:image005.png@01D15EA3.CEBDCB00](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177)[cid:image006.png@01D15EA3.CEBDCB00](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller)[cid:image007.png@01D15EA3.CEBDCB00](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |