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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contacts:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov)/[Michawn Rich](mailto:michawn_rich@heller.senate.gov) | | February 25, 2016 | 202-224-6244 |   **Senate Passes Heller Amendments to Energy Bill**  **(Washington, DC)** - Today, the United States Senate approved two long-standing initiatives introduced by U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) as part of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015, a bipartisan energy bill f**ocused on addressing national energy opportunities and challenges. It will save energy, increase domestic energy and mineral supplies, facilitate investment into critical infrastructure, improve grid security, and boost international trade.**  **“Both of these important initiatives have been top priorities of mine, and I’m proud to see the Senate pass them. They will make a difference across Nevada and the rest of country. Energy continues to be one of Nevada’s greatest assets, and I am thankful to Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell for their leadership on these amendments,”** said Senator Heller**.**    **Background Information on Senator Heller’s Amendments:**  ***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 Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell, is a package of public lands bills that have been approved by the 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*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. * In January of 2015, Senator Heller and Congressman Heck introduced the legislation, which was initially drafted in 2013 following the discovery of the bodies of Keith Goldberg and Air Force Staff Sergeant Antonio Tucker in the Lake Mead Recreation Area by Good Samaritan search and rescue teams. In both cases, the volunteer search teams had to wait nearly one year to obtain the proper permits and insurance before conducting their searches. In Goldberg's case, remains were discovered in less than two hours; in Tucker's it took less than two days.   ###  [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) |