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**Bipartisan Group of Senators Re-Introduce Legislation to Streamline Permitting for Renewable Energy Projects****(Washington, DC)**– Today, U.S. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Jim Risch (R-ID), Jon Tester (D-MT), Cory Gardner (R-CO), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Steve Daines (R-MT), and Tom Udall (D-NM) re-introduced the *Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act*, S. 282. This bipartisan legislation works toward an “all of the above” energy strategy by simplifying the permitting process for solar, geothermal, and wind projects on public lands. Following introduction, the senators offered the following statements:“Nevada is poised for great things when we remove obstacles and let our job creators succeed—the renewable energy industry is no different,” **said** **Senator Dean Heller**. “If we truly want to implement an ‘all-of-the-above’ approach, we have to let renewable energy companies compete on a level playing field. The common-sense approach we have laid out will result in more jobs, true progress toward American energy independence, and preservation of our natural wonders.”“By streamlining renewable energy development, especially in a state with a high wind and solar potential like New Mexico, we can create quality jobs and strengthen our economy as a whole,” **said Senator Martin Heinrich.** “The Public Land Renewable Energy Development Act will modernize the leasing of public lands for development of solar, wind, and geothermal energy, and transition our nation to cleaner energy sources. This bipartisan bill also directs revenues from these projects to impacted counties and critical wildlife habitat conservation projects.”“A broad domestic energy supply is critical for America to grow its economy,” **Senator Jim Risch said.** “This plan helps accomplish that by putting renewable energies under a similar framework as conventional energy sources. It also requires royalty payments that will benefit Idahoans in the counties and states where the projects occur.”“This bipartisan bill will allow us to unlock the renewable energy potential that exists on our public lands, and invest in conservation efforts and support local communities,” **added Senator Jon Tester.** “This is the balance we need to strike to create jobs on our public lands and preserve our Montana way of life.” “An all of the above energy strategy is crucial for our nation's energy independence, and for economic growth in Colorado,” **Senator Cory Gardner said.**“I am honored to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to promote smart and sensible energy policy that makes the best use of our natural resources.”“Renewable energy is one of Colorado’s fastest-growing job sectors,” **said Senator Michael Bennet.** “Leasing public lands for responsible energy development is important to a comprehensive, long-term approach to meet our nation’s energy needs. This bill will put renewables on a level playing field with other forms of energy, while supporting local economies and future conservation efforts.” “Promoting renewable energy development is a key part of strengthening our nation's energy security,” **Senator Steve Daines stated.** “Montana has a diverse energy portfolio and by supporting an all-of-the-above energy mix we can power America for generations to come.”“Protecting public lands in New Mexico and the nation and investing in a clean energy economy are critical to create jobs and support growth in the economy overall. The Public Lands and Renewable Energy Development Act is an important step toward accomplishing these goals,” **Senator Tom Udall said.** “I am proud to cosponsor a bill that allows us to invest in our local communities and conserve our land and wildlife while boosting wind and solar energy development.”**Background:**The Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act streamlines the review of solar, wind, and geothermal projects on public lands and establishes a program at the Department of the Interior focused on making the permitting process more efficient. The legislation also establishes a revenue sharing system that aids local communities that are home to potential projects and helps mitigate the impact construction could have on the land, water, and on wildlife. Heller has long advocated for reforms to renewable energy permitting and energy production revenue sharing. In the 111th Congress, he introduced similar legislation titled the Clean Energy, Community Investment, and Wildlife Conservation Act in the U.S. House, and he teamed up with a bipartisan group of Senators on previous iterations of the Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act in the 112th, 113th, and 114th Congresses. Last Congress, the bill passed the U.S. Senate, [(S.AMDT.3286  to the Energy Policy Modernization Act - S.2012)](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=A202E6C9-9A5E-4DB8-A7B6-5A312DF4F5A9), the first time the legislation passed either body of Congress.  ###http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png |