



Press Release

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Congress overwhelmingly supports hydropower as renewable

WASHINGTON DC (August 8, 2007) – In a stunning 402-9 vote, the House sent a clear message of support for the nation's hydropower resources when it voted to reaffirm its recognition of hydropower as a renewable energy resource.

“NHA is extremely pleased with the House vote. Hydroelectric energy, along with the many benefits it provides, is a vital component of the nation’s energy portfolio,” said Linda Church Ciocci, NHA’s Executive Director. “This recognition is well-deserved, and NHA is gratified by the tremendous show of support. As the nation’s largest renewable energy, hydropower is one of the key tools in combating climate change.”

The hydropower vote came during debate of H.R 3321, the New Direction for Energy Independence, National Security, and Consumer Protection Act, on an amendment offered by Representative William Sali (R-ID) seeking support for both large- and small-scale conventional hydropower technologies. In his speech on the floor, Sali reminded colleagues that hydropower is a clean, renewable, domestic source of energy—one that provides the largest amount of renewable energy generation in the U.S. today.

"If we are going to discuss renewable energy, then we need to include hydropower," Sali said. "Hydropower is clean, renewable, consistent, and most importantly pollution free. Hydropower works all the time and should be part of this bill because hydropower for America means no greenhouse gas emissions. Hydropower offsets more carbon emissions than all other renewable energy resources combined."

The hydropower industry estimates that, in addition to its current contribution, approximately 23,000 megawatts of new energy could be brought online by 2025. More than 95,000 MW are left untapped in the country and have potential for development beyond 2025. To achieve this goal, additional policy support and incentives are needed.

“NHA hopes the support that the House showed this week builds as Congress continues to develop and refine its energy policies. R&D support, greater inclusion in the RPS and the PTC, are all necessary elements if the hydropower industry is to continue its growth and help meet the country’s increasing demand for clean energy,” Church Ciocci said.

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NHA is a non-profit national association dedicated exclusively to advancing the interests of the U.S. hydropower industry. The association represents 61 percent of domestic, non-federal hydroelectric capacity in the U.S. Its membership consists of more than 140 organizations including public utilities, investor-owned utilities, independent power producers, equipment manufacturers, environmental and engineering consultants, and attorneys.