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For Immediate Release

Hydropower industry urges immediate action on bipartisan legislation

Over four dozen organizations send letter to Senate leadership

Washington, D.C. (July 10, 2013) – The time to enact hydropower regulatory improvement legislation is now, dozens of hydropower industry members and energy associations told Senate leaders today.

In a letter addressed to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), the National Hydropower Association, along with over 50 companies and associations, urged final Senate approval of two pieces of legislation aimed at unlocking untapped hydropower potential across the country: H.R. 267, the *Hydropower Regulatory Efficiency Act* and H.R. 678, the *Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act*, and their Senate companions, S. 545 and S. 306, respectively.

“Hydropower is America’s largest renewable electricity resource. The immediate passage of these bills will help to add more hydroelectric capacity to the nation’s electricity portfolio, producing significant job creation, energy and environmental benefits,” they wrote.

The bills, however, have languished at the final hurdle of the legislative process since passing out of the Senate Energy Committee unanimously two months ago. The House of Representatives completed work on the bills earlier in the year, passing H.R. 267 unanimously and H.R. 678 with overwhelming bipartisan support.

“There is no reason not to move to these bills immediately,” said NHA Executive Director Linda Church Ciocci. “They are non-controversial. They have strong support on both sides of the aisle and the Hill. Both industry and the environmental community are supportive. It’s time to send these bills to the president’s desk.”

The legislation promotes the development of small hydropower and conduit projects and aims to shorten regulatory timeframes of certain other low-impact hydropower projects, such as adding power generation to the nation’s existing non-powered dams and closed-loop pumped storage.

“The regulatory improvements contained in these bills will allow more low-impact hydropower projects, particularly small projects and conduits, to be approved in an expedited manner, while continuing to ensure appropriate environmental review and public participation,” the companies wrote.

Hydropower currently provides about two-thirds of the nation’s renewable electricity, with 100,000 MW of installed capacity from coast to coast, and employs approximately 300,000 workers. Estimates done by Navigant Consulting indicate that 60,000 MW of hydropower could be added with the right policies in place, while creating 1.4 million cumulative jobs.

To view the letter and the full list of the 54 signatories, please click [here](#).

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