



January 27, 2016

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
United States Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The National Hydropower Association (NHA), American Public Power Association (APPA), Edison Electric Institute (EEI), Large Public Power Council (LPPC), and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) write to express our appreciation and support for your inclusion of improvements to the hydropower licensing process as part of the Energy Policy Modernization Act, S.2012, coming to the Senate floor this week.

The bipartisan hydropower provisions aim to reduce delays and costs in licensing process, without sacrificing federal and state environmental reviews and public input and engagement. We applaud your leadership on this issue and your recognition of the challenges currently facing the industry as we look to grow and preserve zero-emissions U.S. hydropower resources. We look forward to working further with you to refine and build upon the package as the legislative process advances.

As federal, state and local governments look for clean energy solutions, hydropower, America's single largest source of renewable electricity, remains subject to a development timeline that can take a decade or longer to approve a new project or relicense an existing project. This is far longer than other renewable energy options – and is a comparative disadvantage to other baseload energy options, such as natural gas.

Addressing the inefficiencies for hydropower project licensing is critical if we are serious about addressing our national energy and climate challenges. The industry is fully committed to addressing these challenges in a way that promotes clean, renewable hydropower while enhancing our nation's

rivers and other natural resources, reducing environmental impacts, and providing for recreation and other public values.

Once again, we thank you for your work on this issue. We also note our appreciation for the bill's inclusion of important provisions for increased research and development for marine and hydrokinetic technologies and the extension of the production incentives for hydropower development on existing infrastructure.