

Embracing geothermal energy will propel more sustainable, clean, and reliable energy in California and the entire country.

With a sizeable geothermal reservoir, more growth opportunities will allow California to take full advantage of our natural resources.

My bill will also support local economies as production grows. More geothermal power will create and maintain sustainable local jobs.

Geothermal can be an important tool to make America more energy independent and less dependent on our enemies. My legislation will allow my home State of California to seize the reins as the leading national energy provider.

This bill is simple and straightforward. It is just the type of common-sense solution my constituents sent me to Congress to find.

My legislation amends the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to allow for a new categorical exclusion for geothermal under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Specifically, it would create an exemption for geothermal drilling in situations where drilling has occurred within the last 5 years.

□ 2015

This bill will create an expedited approval process for geothermal projects and a more promising energy future for the United States.

I thank my legislative partners, SUSIE LEE, for working with me in a bipartisan manner to support geothermal energy. I also thank Chairman WESTERMAN and House leadership for working with us to advance this legislation. America needs an all-of-the-above energy approach that includes geothermal.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I am prepared to close, and I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague from California (Mrs. STEEL) for working across the aisle in this bipartisan, all-of-the-above energy bill. I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRANE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6474.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## LAKE TAHOE RESTORATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 612) to reauthorize the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 612

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act".

### SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE LAKE TAHOE RESTORATION ACT.

(a) COOPERATIVE AUTHORITIES.—Section 4(f) of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act (Public Law 106-506) is amended by striking "4 fiscal years following the date of enactment of the Water Resources Development Act of 2016" and inserting "period beginning on the date of enactment of this subsection and ending on the date described in section 10(a)".

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 10(a) of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act (Public Law 106-506) is amended by striking "for a period" and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting "to remain available until September 30, 2034".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 612, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support S. 612, the Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act. This is a bicameral and bipartisan effort being led on the House side by Representatives AMODEI, KILEY, and DUARTE. I applaud their efforts to advance this legislation to the floor. This is a good bill that reauthorizes the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act for another decade, ensuring no lapse in funding for a significant program serving the iconic Lake Tahoe area.

During a hearing on this legislation in the Natural Resources Committee just last week, Julie Regan, the executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, ended her testimony with a quote from Congressman KILEY discussing the importance of Lake Tahoe to his community. Congressman KILEY is quoted as saying:

We can get past the political divides by implementing projects of common importance at a local level. Tahoe is the perfect example. Spanning two States, multiple overlap-

ping jurisdictions, and red and blue counties. Yet we can all agree on the goal of protecting something that is larger than us. That transcends political differences.

I could not agree more with Congressman KILEY's sentiment. I have had the pleasure of seeing the great work in Lake Tahoe firsthand, and the collaboration occurring in the Tahoe basin is truly a model of forest management for the rest of the Nation.

S. 612 will help ensure the continued funding for restoration and resilience activities around Lake Tahoe, including critical work mitigating wildfire risk and restoring forest health. The bill also extends the authorization to enter into contracts and cooperative agreements with States and local governments to conduct fuel reduction, erosion control, and reforestation activities.

Again, I want to commend Representatives AMODEI, KILEY, and DUARTE for working with their bipartisan and bicameral colleagues to advance this important forest management effort and secure the swift consideration of this legislation in the Natural Resources Committee and on the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, September 20, 2024.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,  
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WESTERMAN: I write to you concerning S. 612, the Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, with additional referrals to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and Committee on Agriculture. Specifically, provisions of S. 612 fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House of Representatives in an expeditious manner, and accordingly, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will forgo action on the bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding that doing so will not prejudice the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matter contained within the bill or similar legislation that falls under the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's Rule X jurisdiction. Further, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I appreciate your agreement to support my request to have the Committee represented on the conference committee.

Finally, I would ask that a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest in the bill be included in the Committee Report and Congressional Record during consideration of S. 612 on the House floor.

Sincerely,

SAM GRAVES,  
Chairman, Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,  
Washington, DC, September 23, 2024.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,  
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAVES: I write regarding S. 612, the "Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act." The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, and additionally to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the Committee on Agriculture, and was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on September 19, 2024.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and appreciate your willingness to forgo any further consideration of the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will not formally consider S. 612 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill and will include such letters in the committee report on S. 612. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WESTERMAN,  
*Chairman, Committee on  
Natural Resources.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,  
Washington, DC, September 20, 2024.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,  
*Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,  
Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding S. 612, the "Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act". Thank you for collaborating with the Committee on Agriculture on the matters within our jurisdiction.

The Committee on Agriculture will forego any further consideration of this bill. However, by foregoing consideration at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over any subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. The Committee on Agriculture also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees should it become necessary and ask that you support such a request.

We would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to S. 612 and request a copy of our letters on this matter be published in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,

GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,  
*Chairman.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,  
Washington, DC, September 23, 2024.

Hon. GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,  
*Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,  
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: I write regarding S. 612, the "Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act." The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, and additionally to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the Committee on Agriculture, and was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on September 19, 2024.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and appreciate your willingness to forgo any further consideration of the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Agriculture will not formally consider S. 612 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Agriculture to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WESTERMAN,  
*Chairman, Committee on  
Natural Resources.*

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in support of S. 612, the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act introduced by my colleague from Nevada, Senator CORTEZ MASTO.

The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act is a bicameral, bipartisan effort to continue the tremendous work being completed in California and Nevada for a variety of landscape restoration and resiliency projects.

The waters of Lake Tahoe are among some of the clearest in the world, and the basin is home to wetlands, swamps, deepwater habitat, aspen stands, forests, and meadows that support more than 1,300 species of plants and animals. Tahoe is a natural phenomenon. The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act passed in 2000 in a community effort to preserve and protect the landscape and economy of the basin.

With it came an authorization of \$300 million for 10 years and eventually \$415 million after reauthorization in 2016. Investments made by the Federal Government have leveraged \$500 million in State, local, Tribal, and private matching funds. It also supports an average of 1,700 jobs a year.

Now it is time for us to continue that commitment to protecting the alpine lake landscape.

The work being completed throughout the Lake Tahoe basin exemplifies the value of both targeted Federal investments and community collaboration in forest and landscape management.

In the 1990s, leaders in the basin came together to form a collaborative cross-boundary program known as the Environmental Improvement Program. The EIP has become a model for collaborative conservation.

Overall, ecosystem restoration and management in the Lake Tahoe basin demonstrate how collaboration, partnerships, and dedicated funding for shared goals can yield measurable results.

In the Federal Lands Subcommittee last week, Ms. Regan, the executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, said that the Tahoe model works because it is able to bring together the Federal and private funding

and community consent in a mosaic of governance.

This legislation will continue that important work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KILEY).

Mr. KILEY. Mr. Speaker, I have a tremendous honor to represent the entire California side of Lake Tahoe, and this legislation, the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, is of the highest importance to my constituents. It is also of great importance to the State of California, as well as the State of Nevada. More than that, Lake Tahoe is an American treasure. Preserving its beauty and accessibility is a great national interest, and a national responsibility, with 80 percent of its watershed under Federal ownership.

The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act has been crucial in enabling the communities of the basin to protect the lake for all Americans and for generations to come. Indeed, this bipartisan legislation has become a national model for collaboration in the name of conservation.

Over 50 years ago, California Governor Ronald Reagan and Nevada Governor Paul Laxalt signed an interstate compact to cooperatively manage the environmental health of Lake Tahoe. This compact was ratified by Congress and signed into law by President Nixon, establishing a regional planning agency to work with the Federal Government on responsibly managing the Tahoe basin.

Congress continued to support its role in the basin's health by passing the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2000 and again 16 years later in 2016. This generational, bipartisan support for Lake Tahoe has been vital to its preservation.

The Restoration Act needs to be reauthorized to enable continued conservation efforts. This legislation does that for another decade.

Specific programs include forest health and fuels reduction, combating invasive species, water infrastructure, and water quality improvement.

As one example, the forest health treatments enabled by the act serve as a model of effective forest management, with 21,000 acres treated. This work proved crucial in stopping the devastating Caldor fire of 2021 from becoming an even more catastrophic event, saving the city of South Lake Tahoe. Studies have shown that the forest health treatments in the area reduced the fire's 150-foot flames to 15 feet, making it easier for fire crews to get the blaze under control.

However, much more work remains to restore the areas burned by the Caldor fire and to stop such a disaster from imperiling the basin again.

Beyond just forest health, the restoration efforts enabled by the act are working. In 2023, Lake Tahoe achieved

its highest clarity since the 1980s, thanks to projects that prevented more than 500,000 pounds of fine sediment and pollution from flowing into the lake, as well as wetlands restoration spanning 342 acres and invasive species protection spanning 271 acres. However, in the face of extreme weather and other threats, more work is needed to reduce stormwater pollution and keep Tahoe blue for the next generation.

The coalition supporting the act's renewal today spans a tremendous diversity of viewpoints. Yet we can all agree on the goal of protecting something that is larger than any of us.

Protecting Tahoe is a responsibility for all of us. At the same time, it is an opportunity to forge new partnerships and to form habits of cooperation and collaboration as we work to protect a precious resource and build a better future together. I look forward to continuing the long legacy of bipartisan leadership that has preserved this special place.

I thank my colleagues on both sides, and, in particular, Senator CORTEZ MASTO for guiding this legislation through the Senate. I thank Chairman WESTERMAN for his tremendous leadership and all his help in getting this bill to the floor today, and I urge an "aye" vote.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. AMODEI). He is from the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe.

Mr. AMODEI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding. I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the chairman of the committee and the Representative from New York, (Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ) from the committee. I am not going to repeat all that, I am just going to add a couple of things contextually.

I know that I am the last speaker standing in the way of getting to a Special Order, so I will be brief.

First of all, to my colleague from the Golden State, it is interesting to note historically that when they decided who got to represent what sides of Lake Tahoe, Nevada got first pick. I am honored to have used that to get the side where we have the least developed side there is.

Tahoe is a success story. This is the third authorization, or the second reauthorization of what was done initially. It has been a phenomenal bipartisan effort over the years, with the late great Dianne Feinstein leading the charge, based on her history in the Tahoe basin, and help from people like JOHN GARAMENDI on the other side of the aisle, as well as many others.

I will just say this: It is a team effort that is working well. It has gone through a development stage over the last 20-plus years, but they are clicking along pretty good right now.

I don't have anything sexy to say like humpback something or other or

suckers like the fish from a couple years earlier, we have no razorback anything in Lake Tahoe, but I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I am prepared to close, and I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is a good, commonsense bill that will continue important forest management efforts in an area facing a high risk of catastrophic wildfire. This effort would not have been possible without the leadership of the Members representing the Lake Tahoe basin, including Representative KILEY of California and Congressman AMODEI of Nevada.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 612, the "Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act."

I thank my colleagues, Senator CORTEZ MASTO and Congressman AMODEI for their critical efforts leading the bipartisan bill before us today.

I am honored to be an original cosponsor of the House companion bill.

The "Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act" would reauthorize \$415 million in federal funding for conservation, climate resiliency, and other critical work across the Tahoe Basin through the end of fiscal year 2034.

In addition, this bipartisan bill would renew the cooperative authorities for wildfire prevention and response, first used by the U.S. Forest Service during the 2021 Caldor Fire.

As Deputy Secretary of the Interior during the Clinton Administration, I attended the first annual Tahoe Summit in 1997, organized by the late Senator Dianne Feinstein.

Since then, we have made significant progress to safeguard Lake Tahoe for future generations of Californians and all Americans.

This progress would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of Senator Feinstein spanning three decades.

I urge my colleagues to pass this critical bill to Keep Tahoe Blue, paying tribute to Senator Feinstein's legacy by continuing her important work.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 612.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the chair of the Committee on Ways and Means:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,  
Washington, DC, September 23, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
Speaker, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I, Payson Thomas, Digital Press Assistant for the Committee on Ways and Means of the U.S. House of Representatives, have been served with a subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the District of Montana in *United States of America v. Rogers*, Case No. 23-cr-112, related to events that occurred while I was an employee of Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

PAYSON THOMAS.

□ 2030

#### UNSUSTAINABLE, CRIPPLING FEDERAL DEFICIT AND DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE) is recognized for one-half of the remaining time until 10 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, tonight I join colleagues from both parties in focusing attention on what is truly one of the quietest and most avoided crises in America today. I speak very directly of our Federal budget and, in particular, its unsustainable, crippling Federal deficit and debt.

This silent but accelerating crisis threatens all of us, not only these generations, but generations into the future. This crisis is all of a fiscal crisis, an economic crisis, a social crisis, and a security crisis.

Mr. Speaker, it is a crisis that we are, frankly, busy denying. We are certainly avoiding it and explaining it away, but I think we all know instinctively in this country, and some of us know very consciously in this country, that it is an imminent crisis.

Tonight, colleagues of both parties and I, all of us members of our Bipartisan Fiscal Forum, which has 87 bipartisan Members of the House who are committed to facing and solving this threat, want to discuss this issue in a very brief discussion to assure we do not keep sweeping this crisis under the rug.

We will highlight how our Federal finances work, what is going wrong and why, what are the severe consequences if we don't correct the cause, and what can we do about it.

I will go into details later, but I first want to invite my colleagues to share some of their concerns and perspectives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN), a member of the Budget Committee, an accounting and fiscal management professional before his time in Congress, a