

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 5, 2007

The Honorable Samuel Bodman
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Secretary,

We are writing to strongly urge the Department of Energy (DOE) to fully fund the geothermal energy research and development program, even if it requires DOE to reprogram funds allocated to the Department under H.J. Res 20. We are also writing to convey our continued disappointment with the Department of Energy's omission of geothermal from the Department's loan guarantee program.

As the Department of Energy recognized in its FY07 budget submission, geothermal energy program remains an important regional contributor to energy needs. The Western Governors Association and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have recently produced well respected and scientifically valid reports on the potential for geothermal energy to meet our nation's clean energy needs provided that there is adequate Federal technical and financial support. Numerous western states have made long-term investments intended to develop geothermal energy as part of a comprehensive strategy to diversify the nation's energy resources. We strongly urge DOE to fully fund this important program at the FY2006 level.

The DOE Loan Guarantee Program, passed into law under the Energy Policy Act of 2005, was designed to spur investment in new, clean energy technologies. As defined by law, geothermal was one of a basket of renewable technologies eligible for the loan guarantees. Despite concerns raised by Senators that this was not an optional list of technologies, and after assurances from DOE that the loan guarantee program would be amended once it was provided with the appropriate amount of funding and legal authority, DOE has not included geothermal energy in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking issued on May 16, 2007 as part of the renewable energy loan guarantee program. Noting the prevalence and the importance of geothermal resources to western states, we recommend that DOE immediately amend the notice to include geothermal energy as part of the loan guarantee program.

We appreciate your consideration of this important matter. As senators representing states with increasing demand for renewable technologies, we look forward to receiving notice that you have decided to heed the will of the Senate and fully funded the geothermal energy research and development program and that DOE plans to amend the loan guarantee program, in accordance with the law, to include geothermal energy and all other legally authorized projects.

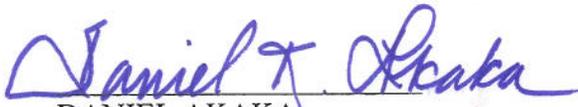
Sincerely,


HARRY REID


JOHN ENSIGN


TED STEVENS


LISA MURKOWSKI


DANIEL AKAKA


DANIEL INOUE

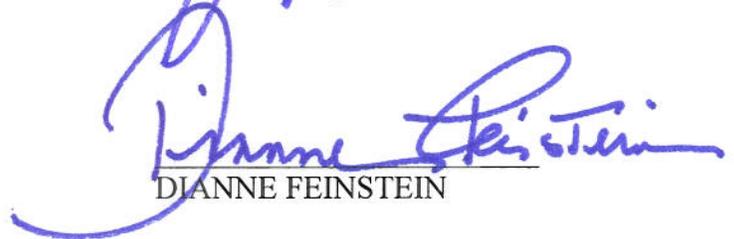

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