

By: Guerra

H.C.R. No. 30

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, In February 2021, Winter Storm Uri provided a harsh
2 reminder of the fragility of the Texas power grid; and

3 WHEREAS, Record low temperatures created a catastrophic
4 energy shortage as weather-related failures took down natural gas,
5 nuclear, coal, wind, and solar generation; natural gas-fired power
6 plants, which supply 42 percent of the state's electricity, ran out
7 of fuel as pipelines and related equipment froze; and

8 WHEREAS, The geographical characteristics of Texas have
9 created untapped geothermal resources that can increase energy
10 options; geothermal, which generates energy using heat from the
11 Earth's interior, is a reliable and flexible source that runs
12 consistently regardless of weather conditions and can quickly
13 adjust to the changing needs of the power system; it is clean,
14 producing 95 percent fewer emissions than coal and 92 percent less
15 than gas; moreover, it is endlessly renewable, as the superheated
16 water can be injected back into the ground to run in a constant
17 loop; and

18 WHEREAS, Texas has a long history with geothermal; the State
19 Capitol was originally heated by geothermal water, and in the
20 1970s, the U.S. Department of Energy funded geothermal projects to
21 provide space heating for the Falls Community Hospital in Marlin
22 and Cotulla High School in the Eagle Ford Shale; geothermal
23 resources along the Gulf Coast were catalogued and proven
24 extractable in the 1970s and '80s, but such initiatives languished

1 once oil prices sank; and

2 WHEREAS, Every oil and gas well brings geothermal heat to the
3 surface as a byproduct; preliminary data collected by Southern
4 Methodist University over 15 years ago indicated that up to 2,000
5 megawatts of geothermal energy could be available just from the
6 state's then-extant oil and gas wells, and the subsequent fracking
7 boom likely means that even more geothermal energy is available;
8 more recent research has identified abundant geothermal energy
9 reserves across Texas, and new technologies have made it possible
10 to extract geothermal energy from deep below the Earth's surface;
11 geothermal technology can repurpose end-of-life oil and gas wells,
12 alleviating the need for plugging, abandonment, or decommissioning
13 while also supporting clean energy generation; and

14 WHEREAS, Geothermal energy development can also repurpose
15 the skills and expertise of the state's oil and gas workers, which
16 are readily transferable; in Canada, many former oil workers have
17 already made this transition; geothermal applications will create
18 independent energy resources and jobs in a rapidly changing
19 industry, and with its well-trained workforce, as well as its
20 geological advantages, Texas is poised to realize tremendous
21 economic development through geothermal expansion; and

22 WHEREAS, Texas must diversify its energy portfolio in order
23 to create a more resilient, responsive power grid and maintain its
24 energy leadership and independence, and geothermal energy is a
25 resource that can provide thousands of good jobs and attract
26 millions in investments while achieving these goals; now,
27 therefore, be it

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1 RESOLVED, That the 88th Legislature of the State of Texas
2 hereby express support for geothermal energy production.