

By: Guerra

H.R. No. 1779

R E S O L U T I O N

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 46 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 source that runs consistently
12 regardless of weather conditions; it is clean, producing 95 percent
13 fewer emissions than coal and 92 percent less than gas; moreover, it
14 is endlessly renewable, as the superheated water can be injected
15 back into the ground to run in a constant loop; and

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

24 WHEREAS, Every oil and gas well brings geothermal heat to the

1 surface as a byproduct; preliminary data collected by Southern
2 Methodist University over 15 years ago indicated that up to 2,000
3 megawatts of geothermal energy could be available just from the
4 state's then-extant oil and gas wells, and the subsequent fracking
5 boom likely means that even more geothermal energy is available;
6 geothermal technology can repurpose end-of-life oil and gas wells,
7 alleviating the need for plugging, abandonment, or decommissioning
8 while also supporting clean energy generation; and

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

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

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas
24 Legislature hereby express support for geothermal energy
25 production.