

EXTENSION OF TIME FOR FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECTS NUMBERED 11547, 10822, AND 10823

SEPTEMBER 26, 2006.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. BARTON of Texas, from the Committee on Energy and Commerce, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 971]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Energy and Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 971) to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of certain hydroelectric projects in Connecticut, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

CONTENTS

	Page
Purpose and Summary	1
Background and Need for Legislation	2
Hearings	2
Committee Consideration	2
Committee Votes	2
Committee Oversight Findings	3
Statement of General Performance Goals and Objectives	3
New Budget Authority, Entitlement Authority, and Tax Expenditures	3
Earmark	3
Committee Cost Estimate	3
Congressional Budget Office Estimate	3
Federal Mandates Statement	4
Advisory Committee Statement	4
Constitutional Authority Statement	4
Applicability to Legislative Branch	4
Section-by-Section Analysis of the Legislation	5
Changes in Existing Law Made by the Bill, as Reported	5

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The purpose of H.R. 971 is to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of three hydroelectric projects in Connecticut: the 440 kilowatt Hale Project (No. 11547), on the Quinebaug River, the 373 kilowatt Collinsville Upper Project (No. 10822), and the 1.1

megawatt Collinsville Lower Project (No. 10823), both on the Farmington River.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Section 13 of the Federal Power Act, 16 U.S.C. § 806 (2000), provides that after the issuance by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) of a hydroelectric license, the licensee must begin construction of the project within the time specified in the license, which can be no more than two years after issuance of the license. FERC may extend this deadline to begin construction by two years. Thus, under the statute, FERC may allow a licensee a maximum of four years from the date of license issuance to begin construction of the hydroelectric project. Section 13 also provides that if the licensee does not begin construction within the time specified in the license or as extended by FERC, then, after due notice, the license shall be terminated by order of FERC. Congress can extend the construction deadline beyond what FERC may authorize through appropriate legislation.

H.R. 971 extends the licenses for these projects until May 30, 2007, with an authorization for the FERC to extend them for two additional two-year periods.

This bill will allow the further development of hydroelectric energy in the New England area.

HEARINGS

The Subcommittee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing on nuclear waste storage and disposal policy, and hydroelectric license extension and energy efficiency legislation, on September 13, 2006. The Subcommittee received testimony from: The Honorable Edward F. Sproat III, Director, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, U.S. Department of Energy; Mr. Luis A. Reyes, Executive Director for Operations, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission; The Honorable Stan Wise, Chairman, Georgia Public Service Commission, on behalf of: National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners; Mr. Anthony F. Earley Jr., Chairman and CEO, DTE Energy Company, on behalf of: Nuclear Energy Institute; Ms. Michelle Boyd, Legislative Director, Public Citizen; The Honorable C. L. "Butch" Otter, Member, U.S. House of Representatives; The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan, Member, U.S. House of Representatives; and Mr. J. Mark Robinson, Director of the Office of Energy Projects, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

On Wednesday, September 20, 2006, the Committee on Energy and Commerce met in open markup session and ordered H.R. 971 favorably reported to the House, without amendment, by a voice vote, a quorum being present.

COMMITTEE VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires the Committee to list the record votes on the motion to report legislation and amendments thereto. There were no record votes taken in connection with ordering H.R. 971 reported.

A motion by Mr. Deal to order H.R. 971 favorably reported to the House, without amendment, was agreed to by a voice vote.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee has not held oversight or legislative hearings on this legislation.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of H.R. 971 is to authorize FERC to reinstate and extend through May 30, 2007 expired licenses to construct, operate and maintain three hydroelectric power projects in the State of Connecticut and to extend the deadlines to commence construction of such projects for up to two consecutive two-year periods.

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY, ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY, AND TAX EXPENDITURES

In compliance with clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds that H.R. 971, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of certain hydroelectric projects in Connecticut, would result in no new or increased budget authority, entitlement authority, or tax expenditures or revenues.

EARMARK

In compliance with H. Res. 1000 as passed the House of Representatives on September 14, 2006, [the Committee finds that H.R. 971, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of certain hydroelectric projects in Connecticut, and for other purposes, contains no earmarks.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

The Committee adopts as its own the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATE

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following is the cost estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, September 25, 2006.

Hon. JOE BARTON,
*Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 971, a bill to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of certain hydroelectric projects in Connecticut, and for other purposes.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Megan Carroll.

Sincerely,

DONALD B. MARRON,
Acting Director.

Enclosure.

H.R. 971—A bill to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of certain hydroelectric projects in Connecticut, and for other purposes

H.R. 971 would authorize the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to reinstate the license for a hydroelectric project (number 11547) in Connecticut. The bill also would extend, through May 20, 2007, the deadlines for commencing construction on that and two other projects in that state (numbers 10822 and 10823). Under the bill, FERC could further extend those deadlines for two consecutive two-year periods.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 971 would have no net effect on the federal budget. The bill would have a minor impact on FERC's workload. Because FERC recovers 100 percent of its costs through user fees, any change in its administrative costs would be fully offset by an equal change in the fees that the commission charges. Because FERC's administrative costs are limited in annual appropriations, the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues.

H.R. 971 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Megan Carroll. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

The Committee adopts as its own the estimate of Federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act were created by this legislation.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 3(d)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds that the Constitutional authority for this legislation is provided in Article I, section 8, clause 3, which grants Congress the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, among the several States, and with the Indian tribes.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Extension of Time for Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project Numbered 11547

Section 1 directs FERC to extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of Project No. 11547 through May 30, 2007. Thereafter, at the request of the licensee, FERC shall extend the time period for two consecutive two-year periods.

Section 2. Extension of Time for Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Projects Numbered 10822 and 10823

Section 2 directs FERC to extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of Project No. 10822 and Project No. 10823 through May 30, 2007. Thereafter, at the request of the licensee for each project, FERC shall extend the time period for two consecutive two-year periods.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

This legislation does not amend any existing Federal statute.