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Geothermal Study Amendments
2026 GENERAL SESSION
STATE OF UTAH
Chief Sponsor: Christine F. Watkins
Senate Sponsor: David P. Hinkins

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill directs Utah State University to conduct a study on the geological and environmental impacts of geothermal energy development.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- directs Utah State University to conduct a study on the geological and environmental impacts of geothermal energy development in the state;
- requires Utah State University to report findings to the Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Interim Committee; and
- provides a repeal date.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

63I-2-279, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 258

ENACTS:

79-6-410, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **63I-2-279** is amended to read:

63I-2-279 . Repeal dates: Title 79.

- (1) Section 79-2-407, Study of funding for water infrastructure costs, is repealed July 1, 2025.

29 (2) Subsection 79-4-1002(2), regarding a pilot program for veteran free admission to state
30 parks, is repealed July 1, 2025.

31 (3) Section 79-6-410, Geothermal energy facilities study, is repealed July 1, 2028.

32 [~~3~~] (4) Title 79, Chapter 6, Part 14, Energy Project Assessment, is repealed January 1,
33 2028.

34 Section 2. Section **79-6-410** is enacted to read:

35 **79-6-410 . Geothermal energy facilities study.**

36 (1) As used in this section, "coal-powered electrical generation facility site" means a
37 location in the state where a facility that generates electricity using coal as a primary fuel
38 source:

39 (a) is currently operating; or

40 (b) has ceased operations but retains existing infrastructure suitable for energy
41 generation purposes.

42 (2) On or before October 31, 2027, Utah State University shall conduct a study on the
43 geological and environmental impacts of geothermal energy development in the state,
44 which shall include:

45 (a) an assessment of subsurface geological conditions and the interactions with
46 geothermal energy development activities;

47 (b) an evaluation of geothermal energy development techniques and the relative impacts
48 on surrounding geological and environmental conditions;

49 (c) an assessment of the geological and environmental impacts of geothermal energy
50 development at or near coal-powered electrical generation facility sites; and

51 (d) recommendations for geothermal energy development practices that minimize
52 geological and environmental impacts.

53 (3) Upon completion of the study described in Subsection (2), Utah State University shall
54 report the findings on or before the November interim meeting to the Public Utilities,
55 Energy, and Technology Interim Committee.

56 Section 3. **Effective Date.**

57 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.