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

2

LONG TITLE

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General Description:

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5 This bill directs the Office of Energy Development to conduct a study to examine the
6 feasibility of developing geothermal energy facilities at or near existing coal-powered
7 electrical generation facilities.

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Highlighted Provisions:

9 This bill:

10 ▶ directs the Office of Energy Development (office) to conduct a study to examine the
11 feasibility of developing geothermal energy facilities at or near existing coal-powered
12 electrical generation facilities;

13 ▶ requires the office to report annually on or before the November interim meeting to the
14 Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Interim Committee;

15 ▶ requires the office to publish the study on the office's website upon completion; and

16 ▶ provides a repeal date.

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Money Appropriated in this Bill:

18 None

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Other Special Clauses:

20 None

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Utah Code Sections Affected:

22 AMENDS:

23 **63I-2-279**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 258

24 ENACTS:

25 **79-6-410**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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

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

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

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(1) Section 79-2-407, Study of funding for water infrastructure costs, is repealed July 1,

31 2025.

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33 parks, is repealed July 1, 2025.

34 (3) Section 79-6-410, Geothermal energy facilities study, is repealed July 1, 2028.

35 [(3)] (4) Title 79, Chapter 6, Part 14, Energy Project Assessment, is repealed January 1,
36 2028.

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

38 **79-6-410 . Geothermal energy facilities study.**

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

42 (a) is currently operating; or

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

45 (2) On or before December 31, 2027, the office shall work with the Utah Geological Survey
46 to conduct a study to examine the feasibility of developing geothermal energy facilities
47 at or near coal-powered electrical generation facility sites in the state.

48 (3) The study described in Subsection (2) shall include, for each coal-powered electrical
49 generation facility site:

50 (a) an assessment of:

51 (i) subsurface temperatures;

52 (ii) steam quality;

53 (iii) potential electricity production;

54 (iv) infrastructure suitability;

55 (v) estimated capital costs; and

56 (vi) economic and job impacts; and

57 (b) recommendations for geothermal energy system development.

58 (4) The office shall publish the study on the office's website upon completion.

59 (5) The office shall report annually on or before the November interim meeting to the
60 Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Interim Committee regarding the status of the
61 study.

62 Section 3. **Effective Date.**

63 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.