

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 9

BY ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND RECOGNIZING HYDROPOWER AS THE  
2 STATE'S GREATEST RENEWABLE RESOURCE AND FURTHER RECOGNIZING THE IM-  
3 MENSE BENEFIT HYDROPOWER PROVIDES TO OUR STATE AS A CARBON-FREE, INEX-  
4 PENSIVE ELECTRICAL POWER SOURCE AND AS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER FOR TOURISM,  
5 RECREATION, AND AGRICULTURE IN IDAHO.  
6

7 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

8 WHEREAS, Idaho's many rivers provide an abundant resource that is re-  
9 newed annually by rain and snow; and

10 WHEREAS, Idaho's many rivers can be used to generate electricity; and

11 WHEREAS, Idaho's many rivers, and the reservoirs created to generate  
12 hydroelectric power, support Idaho's economy as a source of recreation,  
13 fishing, and irrigation; and

14 WHEREAS, Idaho is conscious of its obligation for responsible steward-  
15 ship of the environment and wildlife associated with the reservoirs used to  
16 generate hydroelectric power; and

17 WHEREAS, river water's potential energy from a dammed river or reser-  
18 voir and its kinetic energy from the flow of the river can be converted to  
19 electricity without emission of carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases and  
20 can therefore be considered a carbon-free energy source; and

21 WHEREAS, legislation at both the national and state level promotes re-  
22 duction of greenhouse gas emissions in the generation of electricity and the  
23 development of carbon-free sources such as wind and solar power; and

24 WHEREAS, river water's potential energy from a dammed reservoir can be  
25 adjusted in real time to provide flexibility to a grid that includes variable  
26 sources of carbon-free wind and solar power; and

27 WHEREAS, the Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources reports  
28 that Idaho's many rivers presently power over 140 electricity-generating or  
29 hydroelectric plants that have a combined capacity of approximately 2,500  
30 MW; and

31 WHEREAS, Idaho's largest hydroelectric dams are the 1,167 MW Hells  
32 Canyon Complex, consisting of the Hells Canyon, Oxbow, and Brownlee dams,  
33 owned by Idaho Power; the 400 MW Dworshak dam operated by the U.S. Army Corps  
34 of Engineers; the 260 MW Cabinet Gorge Project owned by Avista Corporation;  
35 Rocky Mountain Power's Bear River hydroelectric projects, totaling 78.7 MW,  
36 and its Ashton project totaling 7.35 MW; and

37 WHEREAS, in 2010, Idaho's hydroelectric power plants generated  
38 9,154,00 MWh, or about 76% of in-state electrical generation, and in 2016,  
39 hydropower supplied 59% of net electricity generation, the second largest  
40 share in the nation, despite the fact that drought reduced hydropower's  
41 share from an average of 72% over the previous ten years; and

42 WHEREAS, the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources reports that these  
43 hydroelectric plants contribute significantly to Idaho's low residential,

1 commercial, and industrial electric rates and that in 2016, Idaho had the  
2 fifth lowest average electricity prices in the United States; and

3 WHEREAS, Idaho has one of the region's oldest publicly owned electric  
4 utilities; the city of Idaho Falls has owned and operated a hydroelectric  
5 generation system since 1900, which now consists of five hydropower plants  
6 along the Snake River that provide nearly one-third of the electricity used  
7 in the city; and

8 WHEREAS, Idaho's twenty-two rural electric cooperatives and municipal  
9 power companies provide electric power to over 137,000 consumers across the  
10 state, purchasing 96% of the power they distribute from the Bonneville Power  
11 Administration, which produces 8,935 aMW of federal hydro generation annu-  
12 ally under average streamflow conditions; and

13 WHEREAS, predecessor companies of Rocky Mountain Power began providing  
14 electric service to Idaho customers in the 1890s, were consolidated in 1912,  
15 and today the company provides electric service to some 82,000 Idaho cus-  
16 tomers; and

17 WHEREAS, Idaho's hydroelectric power is abundant, renewable, low-cost,  
18 carbon-free, and responsibly maintained.

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular Ses-  
20 sion of the Sixty-fifth Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives and  
21 the Senate concurring therein, that we recognize hydropower as our state's  
22 greatest renewable resource and further recognize the immense benefit hy-  
23 dropower provides to our state as a carbon-free, inexpensive electrical  
24 power source and as an economic driver for tourism, recreation, and agricul-  
25 ture in Idaho.