

[H.R. 2081, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Tuesday, March 15, 2016, the House will complete consideration of [H.R. 2081](#), to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 2081 was introduced on April 28, 2015 by Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT) and was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, which ordered the bill reported by unanimous consent on February 25, 2016.

SUMMARY

H.R. 2081 authorizes the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, upon the request of the licensee for the project numbered 12478-003 (Gibson Dam, Montana), to extend for six years the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of the project.

BACKGROUND

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. FERC also reviews proposals to build liquefied natural gas terminals and interstate natural gas pipelines as well as licensing hydropower projects.¹

Section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) requires a hydropower licensee to begin construction on a licensed project within two years of obtaining the license. FERC may extend this timeline once for an additional two-year period. The license expires and is terminated if the licensee is unable to begin construction by the extended deadline.²

According to the bill sponsor, "Due to the layers of red tape in Washington, D.C., little progress has been made. Extending the federal license for [the Gibson Dam] will allow important upgrades to our

¹ See the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's website, "[What FERC Does](#)".

² See the Committee on Energy and Commerce's [background memo](#) at 7-8.

infrastructure while helping tap into Montana’s extensive hydropower potential to provide more affordable energy to Montana families and small businesses.”³

COST

A Congressional Budget Office (CBO) cost estimate is currently not available.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Jake Vreeburg](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 3-1555.

³ See Rep. Zinke’s Press Release, [“Montana Delegation Introduces Legislation to Ensure Completion of Montana Hydro Projects”](#) April 28, 2015.