



September 11, 2026

The Honorable Mike Lee

Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
U.S. Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich

Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
U.S. Senate
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for S. 5048, the Hydropower Licensing Affordability Act

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

On behalf of the Large Public Power Council (LPPC), I write in support of S. 5048, the Hydropower Licensing Affordability Act, and to urge the Committee to advance it.

LPPC represents 29 of the nation's largest state and locally owned, not-for-profit public power systems, serving 30.5 million Americans across 23 states and territories. Seventeen of our members own hydropower and 22 have it in their portfolios. **Member-owned plants total 12.8 gigawatts and generate nearly 40 percent of the nation's non-federal hydropower affected by this bill**, roughly 52.5 terawatt-hours a year. Our members are not-for-profit and set rates on a cost-of-service basis. There is no shareholder to absorb a licensing cost, so every dollar of it reaches the bill a household or business pays.

A substantial share of the non-federal fleet comes up for relicensing over the next decade. For many of our members, relicensing proceedings now run longer and cost more than the original construction of the facility. Those proceedings set the terms on which existing, already-built, carbon-free generation continues to operate, at a time when our nation's grid has record demand for electricity.

S. 5048 would require that mandatory conditions issued under Sections 4(e) and 18 of the Federal Power Act be limited to conditions that reasonably mitigate the direct adverse effect of the applicable project. By restoring a clear nexus between project impacts and mandatory federal requirements, the legislation would promote more predictable, transparent, and balanced licensing outcomes while maintaining important environmental protections. Our members have spent decades working with federal agencies, tribes, and other stakeholders to develop license conditions that protect fish, wildlife habitat, and public lands, and they continue to support that work. A more predictable licensing framework will reduce unnecessary costs and help preserve affordable electricity rates for families, businesses, and public institutions.

We appreciate the Committee's attention to hydropower licensing reform and urge you to advance S. 5048 and support passage this Congress. LPPC and its member utilities are glad to be a resource to you and your staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Tom Falcone'.

Tom Falcone
President