

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 3, 2022

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone,

This Congress we have passed legislation that bolsters the electric grid, invests in renewable energy and battery storage, and deploys electric vehicle charging infrastructure. And while we applaud this Committee's continued focus on the clean energy transition, it is also important that we not lose sight of hydropower's long-standing role as a clean source of baseload power.

In 2020, hydropower provided more than 7% of the country's total electricity, yet only 3% of our nation's dams currently have hydropower capabilities. However, rehabilitating existing hydropower plants and retrofitting additional dams with hydropower has the potential to provide an additional 13 GW of electricity generating capacity.¹ Hydropower is also a flexible resource, with the ability to be ramped up and down, which will play a critical role in integrating other sources of renewable power onto the grid. As we continue efforts to transition towards a clean energy economy, it is critical we find ways to maximize our hydropower resources and their renewable energy generating capabilities by investing in our nation's dams.

To that end, a wide range of stakeholders have come together to form the Uncommon Dialogue to develop a mutual policy proposal for hydropower reforms intended to improve the hydropower licensing and relicensing process. This coalition of dam owners, representatives of Tribal nations, local government, environmental, and conservation organizations represent an unprecedented agreement between stakeholders that often have competing interests.

Our understanding is that the Committee is considering holding a hearing on hydropower. Given the broad support for policy reforms and the significant potential of hydropower as a renewable energy resource, we respectfully urge the Energy & Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Energy hold an oversight hearing this month on hydropower to learn more about the proposal.

Sincerely,



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress

¹ The U.S. Department of Energy, "Hydropower Vision." (2016, October).
<https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2018/02/f49/Hydropower-Vision-021518.pdf>