

DEAR COLLEAGUE LTRS.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hydropower Industry and Environmentalists Agree:
H.R. 4's Provisions for Alternative Conditions and Fishways Promote Energy Supplies and
Protect the Environment

July 31, 2001

Dear Colleague:

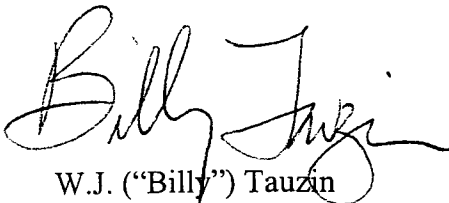
Over the next 15 years, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) must consider relicensing more than half of our nation's hydroelectric power projects (roughly 28,000 megawatts). Current law gives states and the federal resources agencies (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service) authority to impose mandatory conditions on FERC-issued hydroelectric power licenses. The number of parties to the licensing process, the competing interests and missions, and open-ended proceedings often contribute to the time and costs involved in obtaining a hydroelectric license from FERC.

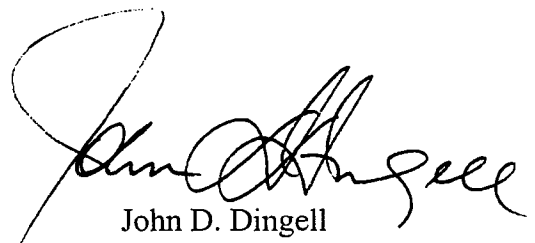
One area identified to improve the licensing process is to require agencies to consider alternative conditions proposed by a licensee or other party to the proceeding. Current law allows the resources agencies broad discretion in imposing a mandatory condition. The hydroelectric licensing provisions in Division A of H.R. 4 would require the resources agencies to give due consideration to alternative conditions that may cost less to implement in terms of dollars or energy lost, yet provide greater, or at a minimum no less, environmental protection. Additionally, Title VI of Division A addresses another area identified for improvement: FERC data collection on the time and costs involved in obtaining a new license. Without placing any additional undue reporting requirements on license applicants, the reforms required by H.R. 4 will help lead to more efficient relicensing procedures.

But don't take our word for it. Industry and environmental groups alike agree with the hydropower licensing improvements in H.R. 4. American Rivers, Trout Unlimited, and the Hydropower Reform Coalition, along with the National Hydropower Association, American Public Power Association, and the Edison Electric Institute all support the language in Division A of H.R. 4, and oppose amendments to it.

The hydroelectric licensing language contained in Division A of H.R. 4 is a bi-partisan, consensus provision that carefully balances energy and environmental priorities to achieve a significant breakthrough in licensing reform. We urge you to join with us, the industry, and environmental groups in opposing all amendments to this provision.

Sincerely,


W.J. ("Billy") Tauzin


John D. Dingell