

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 4270

To amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to direct the Secretary of Energy to carry out a research, development, and demonstration program with respect to abandoned wells, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 30, 2021

Mr. LAMB (for himself, Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. LUCAS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

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## A BILL

To amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to direct the Secretary of Energy to carry out a research, development, and demonstration program with respect to abandoned wells, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Abandoned Well Reme-  
5 diation Research and Development Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO THE ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005.**

7 The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended—

1           (1) in subtitle F of title IX (42 U.S.C. 16291  
2           et seq.), by inserting after section 969D the fol-  
3           lowing:

4           **“SEC. 969E. ABANDONED WELLS RESEARCH, DEVELOP-**  
5   **MENT, AND DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.**

6           “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days  
7           after the date of enactment of the Abandoned Well Reme-  
8           diation Research and Development Act, the Secretary of  
9           Energy shall, in coordination with relevant Federal and  
10          state agencies and entities, establish a research, develop-  
11          ment, and demonstration program to improve—

12                   “(1) data collection on the location of aban-  
13                   doned wells;

14                   “(2) the plugging, remediation, reclamation,  
15                   and repurposing of abandoned wells; and

16                   “(3) mitigating potential environmental impacts  
17                   of documented and undocumented abandoned wells.

18          “(b) ACTIVITIES.—The research, development, and  
19          demonstration under subsection (a) shall include activities  
20          to improve—

21                   “(1) remote sensor capabilities, LiDAR capa-  
22                   bilities, optical gas imaging, magnetic survey tech-  
23                   nology, and any other technologies relevant to the ef-  
24                   ficient identification of abandoned wells;

1           “(2) understanding of how certain parameters  
2           of abandoned wells affect methane emission rates of  
3           such wells, including parameters such as well age,  
4           well depth, geology, construction, case material, and  
5           geographic region; and

6           “(3) the efficiency and cost-efficacy of processes  
7           for plugging, remediating, reclaiming, and  
8           repurposing abandoned wells, including—

9                   “(A) improvement of processes and tech-  
10                   nologies for the unique challenges associated  
11                   with plugging remote abandoned wells;

12                   “(B) use of low carbon, lightweight cement  
13                   or use of alternative materials and additives for  
14                   plugging purposes; and

15                   “(C) repurposing of abandoned wells for  
16                   alternative uses, including geothermal power  
17                   production or carbon capture, utilization, and  
18                   storage.

19           “(c) ABANDONED WELL DEFINED.—In this section,  
20           the term ‘abandoned well’ means a well originally drilled  
21           in connection with oil and gas operations that is not being  
22           used, has not been plugged, and has no anticipated use  
23           in oil and gas operations.

1       “(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
2 are authorized to be appropriated for purposes of this sec-  
3 tion—

4           “(1) \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2022;

5           “(2) \$31,250,000 for fiscal year 2023;

6           “(3) \$32,500,000 for fiscal year 2024;

7           “(4) \$33,750,000 for fiscal year 2025; and

8           “(5) \$35,000,000 for fiscal year 2026.”; and

9           (2) in section 1(b) (42 U.S.C. 15801 note), in  
10 the table of contents, by inserting after the matter  
11 related to section 969D the following:

“Sec. 969E. Abandoned wells research, development, and demonstration pro-  
gram.”.

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