



**REPRESENTATIVE GENE WHISNANT
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, April 23, 2015

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**Joint Memorial Urging Siting Of Geothermal Research Lab In Deschutes County
Passes House**

*U.S. Department Of Energy Lab Will Research Economically Sustained Heat Exchange
Systems*

Salem, OR – Representative Gene Whisnant (R-Sunriver) sponsored and carried House Joint Memorial 19 (HJM 19) successfully on the House Floor today with a unanimous vote of passage. HJM 19 urges the Secretary of Energy and Congress to site the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) State's Frontier Observatory for Research in Geothermal Energy (FORGE) at the Newberry Geothermal Project in Deschutes County.

The FORGE will perform advanced research on enhanced geothermal systems for the purpose of developing large-scale, economically sustained heat exchange systems. The construction and operation of the lab in Deschutes County would also create hundreds of temporary and permanent employment positions for central Oregonians. Other states, including Idaho, are seeking the FORGE lab.

"Deschutes County is a prime location to locate this Geothermal Research Lab. Constructing and operating the lab here would produce economic benefits to the region and make Oregon a national leader in researching alternative energy sources," said Rep. Whisnant. "The DOE estimates that the FORGE lab will be funded at \$30 million per year, as well as employ an estimated 301 people during the construction phase and another 100 to operate the lab."

An Oregon advantage for the FORGE siting is that it would be located near the private AltaRock Newberry Geothermal Project, which is already working with the DOE and Oregon State University.

HJM 19 supporters include Governor Kate Brown, United States Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, and local private and public organizations.

"I look forward to working with our colleagues at the federal level to bring this lab to Oregon and continue to make our state a leader in alternative energy production," continued Rep. Whisnant.

HJM 19 is also sponsored by House Republican Leader Mike McLane (R-Powell Butte), Representative Gail Hildreth Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls), and Senators Tim Knopp (R-Sunriver) and Doug Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls).

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