How the "Big, Beautiful Bill" Will Impact Montana Energy and Mineral Production

Data is sourced from the Clean Economy Tracker unless otherwise noted. Data as of June 2025. Fact sheet updated July 2025.

Questions? Reach out to us at info@cleaneconomytracker.org.

What does the “Big, Beautiful Bill” mean for domestic clean energy manufacturing? What does it mean for Montana?

In 2022, new federal law introduced domestic energy manufacturing incentives and federal support for clean energy projects. This includes incentives for critical mineral extraction.

The “Big, Beautiful Bill" will cut access to key tax credits and federal support, including:

- Adding restrictions to the Advanced Manufacturing Production Tax Credit (45X), which incentivized U.S. clean energy supply chain components.
- Adding restrictions to credits for wind and solar projects (45Y, 48E), which included bonuses for U.S.-sourced materials.
- Phasing out the Clean Vehicle Tax Credit (30D), which lowered the price of electric vehicles that source battery components from the U.S. or our allies, including critical minerals.
- Eliminating credits to install solar panels and other energy technologies on homes to lower household energy bills (25D).

These tax credits have increased demand for domestically-sourced critical minerals that are used in clean technologies such as EVs, batteries, and solar panels. Restricting these tax credits undermines the economic case for investing in an American critical mineral supply chain, a market that Montana is poised to lead.

The “Big, Beautiful Bill” Threatens Critical Mineral Mining in Montana

Montana boasts a diverse array of mineral resources, including copper, cobalt, nickel, platinum-group elements, and rare earth elements. The state's geological formations, such as the Stillwater Igneous Complex and the Belt Supergroup, contain large deposits of these minerals. This positions Montana to meet growing demand for critical minerals – the IEA estimates the global demand will double by 2030 and triple by 2040.

Projects like Stillwater West are exploring these resources to bolster domestic supply chains. The project has attracted $10 million in investments so far and is targeting the extraction of nine critical minerals. Though the project is still in the exploratory phase, it could potentially inject billions into

Montana's economy. Besides generating millions in tax revenues, large-scale mining projects create hundreds of high-quality jobs: the average mining job pays 81% higher than the Montana average.

What will the "Big, Beautiful Bill" mean for Montana's energy?

Montana ranks 10th in the nation in share of electricity from renewables, with over 52% coming from primarily hydroelectric and wind power. Montana has **4.8 GW** of clean electricity deployed, **0.33 GW** under construction, and another **1.49 GW** planned. The table below shows the breakdown of clean electricity generation by technology:

Clean Power in Montana

Technology	Operating (GW)	Planned (GW)	Construction (GW)	Total (GW)
Hydroelectric	2.67	0.007	0.007	2.69
Onshore Wind	1.9	0.63	0.33	2.86
Solar	0.18	0.4	0	0.58
Batteries	0	0.45	0	0.45
Total	**4.77**	**1.49**	**0.33**	**6.59**

Data refers to nameplate capacity for clean energy generation.

These projects could be jeopardized by recent changes to the clean electricity tax credits (48E, 45Y). Restricting these credits for wind and solar will also reduce clean energy on the grid when more is needed – Montana's energy demand is projected to double in the next 20 years. Additionally, clean power projects provide nearly $13 million in extra income for farmers annually.

Which Montana energy projects are at risk?

- Puget Sound Energy signed a long-term contract for Haymaker Wind in Wheatland and Meagher County for hundreds of megawatts of wind power. Construction is expected to begin in 2026, with the project coming online in 2028. The wind farm will generate over $100 million in property taxes over the course of its lifetime, supporting local schools, infrastructure, and services.
    - Puget Sound Energy also acquired Beaver Creek wind farm in Stillwater County to supply 248 MW to Washington state. This project is expected to come online in 2025.
- BrightNight is developing the Opportunity Solar and Battery Storage on the former Anaconda Copper Mine site (now a designated superfund site). Developed on otherwise unusable land, the project will add 200 MW of solar and 200 MW of battery storage. This project will create 250 construction jobs and generate over $110 million in local tax revenue.

Will my energy bills go up?

The law eliminates programs and cuts access to key credits that lower the cost of energy. Energy Innovation estimates that the average Montana household will spend nearly **$200 more per year on energy by 2030,** and **$530 more by 2035**.

What does this mean for Montana's energy exports?

Montana has the 2nd highest wind generation potential in the country, second only to Texas. If fully realized, Montana's wind energy could meet total state energy demand 16 times over. With all that extra electricity, Montana could also become a lead exporter of power to other states.

Montana stands to benefit from the North Plains Connector, a major transmission project that will bring $3.6 billion in investment and hundreds of jobs to the state. By linking eastern and western power grids, the line will let Montana export its clean electricity to meet growing demand in other states. But projects like this rely on the Clean Electricity Tax Credits (45Y, 48E) that make clean energy competitive and financeable. Resources for the Future estimates that without these credits, the Mountain region could see a 50+ GW reduction in wind and solar capacity, and Montana will risk missing out on economic opportunities that come with being a clean energy exporter.

What does this mean for residential energy projects in Montana?

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that Montana has installed 74 MW of residential solar. With current incentives, the average Montana household would **save $29,238 over 25 years** if they installed solar panels. However, the "Big, Beautiful Bill" will eliminate the Residential Clean Energy Property Credit (25D) that helps people make these cost-saving upgrades. The credit also covers other household energy technologies like battery storage, geothermal heat pumps, and solar water heaters.

Is Montana alone?

No. We are experiencing a nationwide boom in the U.S. clean economy. In the last three years, companies have announced at least $169 billion in investments and 172,900 jobs across over 600 clean manufacturing projects in 47 states, with 77% of the investment in Republican districts. Clean energy projects totaling 325 GW, enough to power 105 million homes or 209 million EVs, have been built or planned, 80% in Republican districts. This equals the energy output of 156 Hoover Dams.

With this new law, Energy Innovation projects a $1.1 trillion GDP drop from 2025-2034. Electricity costs would rise 50%, adding $170 billion annually for consumers by 2035. By 2030, 830,000 jobs would be lost, and an additional 790,000 jobs will be lost by 2035.

Top Five Employers in Montana

(source)

1. Schneider
2. Fringe Benefit Resources
3. Billings Clinic
4. United Financial Services
5. Montana State University