



WESTERN ENERGY ALLIANCE

July 30, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
United States House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Westerman:

As a coalition of oil and natural gas trade associations representing over 80 percent of domestic oil and natural gas production in the United States, we write in strong support of the "Standardized Permitting and Expediting Development Act" (SPEED Act) and thank you and all the sponsors for introducing this important legislation. The bipartisan nature of this legislation is both important in a divided and polarized political environment and essential to get this bill across the legislative "finish line."

Reforming the nation's outdated permitting system is key to the success of the American economy. The SPEED Act addresses many of the most critical issues surrounding the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and makes commonsense reforms to the law.

Since NEPA's enactment, the scope of its requirements and applications have grown considerably and place a heavy burden on America's oil and natural gas explorers and producers. While the law has remained unchanged over the past 50 years, the courts, Presidential directives, and agencies' implementation of NEPA regulations have made NEPA unworkable and far more complicated than its original intent. Modernizing NEPA will help reduce needless delays that hinder American oil and natural gas projects and desperately needed infrastructure initiatives across the nation.

During the previous Trump Administration, efforts to modernize NEPA were undertaken that would have spurred key efficiency initiatives. However, the Biden Administration forestalled all these needed changes and instead implemented relentless permitting obstacles and environmental analysis under NEPA to delay projects for years. Oil and natural gas exploration projects, pipelines, roads, bridges, and other vital infrastructure often cannot get built not because Americans do not have the capability to do so, but because of delay and obstruction caused by the bureaucracy of the federal government.

A wide array of issues affects timeframes for complying with NEPA. In an attempt to respond to relentless court challenges, federal agencies endlessly revise information requirements throughout the NEPA review process. Instead of working with the industries they regulate to implement reasonable environmental and conservation efforts, the federal government gets caught in a "paper chase" to create "appeal proof" NEPA documents. This is not only highly inefficient but hinders efforts to find innovative solutions to protect the environment, unlock investments, and create jobs.

The SPEED Act addresses many of the most pressing issues surrounding NEPA delays and will provide durable solutions to help expedite much needed infrastructure projects across the country. The legislation contains many important changes to NEPA, but we would like to specifically highlight the following actions outlined in the SPEED Act:

- Establishes a threshold of NEPA applicability that provides further clarity when an action can be defined as a “major federal action” under the law. In addition, the bill ensures federal agencies limit the scope of environmental reviews under NEPA and provides clarity to agencies when completing NEPA reviews.
- Requires federal agencies to consider only the environmental effects directly caused by a specific project and excludes effects that are speculative or are part of a different project.
- Eliminates duplication when agencies undertake a NEPA review. Federal land management agencies frequently request duplicative and redundant environmental documentation during the leasing process for oil and natural gas projects on federal lands. The agencies should be directed to use existing studies and environmental documentation to reduce NEPA timeframes.
- Reduces the statute of limitations for NEPA analysis and places a limitation on claims. The current six-year statute of limitations for aggrieved parties to file litigation after an agency makes a final permitting decision is too long. The SPEED Act grants plaintiffs no more than 150 days (five months) for filing a civil action against an agency action. In addition, the bill ensures that agencies can correct NEPA deficiencies before litigation, and that claims are only filed by those organizations that truly have standing.
- Removes the ability for courts to vacate or enjoin agency actions under NEPA. The legislation also provides a 180-day deadline for agency remand of actions under NEPA.
- Addresses timing delays involving NEPA that create significant problems for oil and natural gas producers operating on federal lands. Some energy projects can take several years to complete. During this long time, conditions can change – projects become uneconomic, the technology used to develop a project can improve, environmental analysis can become stale, and environmental conditions can change. Establishing reasonable timelines during the NEPA process is essential.

The members of this coalition applaud you for all your work in looking for solutions to reform our nation's permitting system. The SPEED Act makes many significant changes that would positively impact our members' ability to produce energy in America, and we stand ready to help you get this important bill approved. Thank you and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues to take action on the SPEED Act.

Sincerely,

Energy Workforce & Technology Council
Gulf Energy Alliance
Independent Petroleum Association of America
International Association of Drilling Contractors
National Ocean Industries Association
Texas Alliance of Energy Producers
U.S. Oil & Gas Association
Western Energy Alliance