

**December 13, 2024**

Dear Members of Congress:

The undersigned organizations strongly believe that our nation needs across-the-board federal permitting reform. This requires amending the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as well as the many environmental statutes with permitting requirements, such as the Clean Water Act.

We write this letter though to strongly urge you to address permitting reform next year, not in the lame duck. Recent reports of permitting and transmission legislation gaining momentum this year are concerning.

It is generally inadvisable to rush any major legislation, especially during a lame duck session. Further, it makes no sense for Republicans to move forward with legislation now when next year they will control the House, the Senate, and the White House.

Anything that Republicans and those who want genuine permitting reform can get now they can get next year, and much more. There would be less need for compromise, such as by enacting harmful transmission policy that would untap the Inflation Reduction Act subsidies and primarily serve to put unreliable electricity generation on the grid (i.e. wind and solar).

The transmission policies in bills such as the Energy Permitting Reform Act of 2024 (S. 4753) would create these problems, as well as increase the federal role over transmission policy and hurt consumers. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has warned that the bill in its current form “would greatly expand federal control over co-ops, subjecting them to unacceptable regulation and driving up costs for consumers.”

Republicans should be trying to dismantle the Green New Deal, not enabling it, yet misguided transmission policy would do just that.

In 2025, those who want real permitting reform will have an excellent opportunity to make this objective a reality. Passing weak or even harmful permitting legislation during the lame duck will provide a viable excuse for opponents of permitting reform to block real reform next year.

There are too many federal permitting obstacles that make it difficult to build everything from critical energy and water infrastructure to a family home. Our organizations look forward to working with you on permitting reform for 2025 to reduce these obstacles. The few weeks remaining this year are not the time for such efforts.

We strongly urge you to not pursue permitting legislation in the lame duck and to proactively fight for major reform in 2025.

Sincerely,

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