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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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October 3, 2025

Ms. Staci Pies
Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and Policy
INCOMPAS
1100 G Street NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Pies,

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology on Thursday, September 18, 2025, to testify at the hearing entitled, "Examining Solutions to Expedite Broadband Permitting."

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Friday, October 17, 2025. Your responses should be mailed to Noah Jackson, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to noah.jackson@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



Richard Hudson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

CC: The Honorable Doris Matsui, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

Attachment —Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Russ Fulcher

1. In your testimony on trying to improve communication and coordination between local district rangers and agency heads when it comes to approving broadband projects, you said this demonstrates the need for a “streamlined process” that all can reference through “digital portals” or even “AI programs” that can help reduce miscommunication, delays, and other problems. Can you build on that through some examples of the ways and areas of the process such technologies can improve?
 - a. Would this digital portal be available to the broadband provider, helping them to understand the requirements of the agencies more easily when they submit an application?
 - b. Is there an area of improvement there we should consider?

INCOMPAS Response:

Absolutely. The portal should be designed with both agency and provider access in mind, offering:

- Clear, agency-specific permitting requirements.
- Interactive forms that guide applicants through the process.
- AI-driven suggestions addressing documentation needs.
- A dashboard to track progress and communicate with permitting authorities.

This transparency would reduce errors, shorten review cycles, and improve trust between providers and agencies.

Example: In recent years, permitting and deploying large-scale infrastructure, such as broadband fiber, utility lines, and data centers, has become more reliant on software workflows and automation. These tools reduce friction, enforce consistency, and enable greater scalability. Although the examples below are not INCOMPAS members, the cited organizations provide products and tools that may be informative as Congress and federal agencies consider broader permitting reform.

OpenGov is a civic permitting platform used by local and regional governments.¹ The platform helps streamline permit submissions, plan reviews, inspection scheduling, and public tracking, moving them from paper and email to structured digital workflows. Applicants submit engineering plans, attachments, and schedule inspections electronically. Agencies can then review routes, issue markups, and monitor bottlenecks to ensure efficient workflow. OpenGov’s right-of-way permitting and GIS integration features are especially useful for infrastructure projects involving roads, utilities, or conduit routing.¹

Sitetracker works at the intersection of permitting, construction, and closeout. It offers a centralized operations platform. Users can link permit dependencies to build schedules, capture field data on mobile devices, and automate closure documentation and audit trails. For projects with many permits, Sitetracker provides real-time visibility, reduces errors, and ensures closeout deliverables meet agency expectations.²

Each of these tools (or analogous systems) lays the foundation for a reliable, scalable ecosystem in which agencies and applicants interact through standardized digital exchanges rather than ad-hoc

¹ <https://opengov.com/products/permitting-and-licensing/>

² <https://www.sitracker.com/industries/telecommunications/>

paper, email, or USB drives. To accelerate national infrastructure buildout, Congress should implement policy measures that incentivize states and local jurisdictions to adopt interoperable permitting platforms. Additionally, grant or funding programs can be structured to incentivize applicants to use or be compatible with such platforms as a prerequisite for funding.

The Honorable Tom Kean, Jr.

1. You discussed how AI tools could be leveraged by federal agencies to improve their permitting processes. What might these tools look like, and can local jurisdictions do the same?

INCOMPAS Response

INCOMPAS members and partners are already developing and deploying tools that demonstrate the feasibility and value of digital permitting and AI-assisted review. For example, Microsoft's Copilot permitting solution shows that the private sector is ready to support a modernized permitting system. These tools can reduce delays, improve transparency, and help both federal and local agencies manage the growing volume and complexity of broadband and AI infrastructure projects.

Microsoft has developed a Copilot-based permitting solution³ that uses AI to:

- Interpret local regulations.
- Draft and complete permitting documents.
- Compare permitting requirements across jurisdictions.
- Generate environmental impact statements and hazard assessments.

This solution is already being used in the energy and infrastructure sectors and could be adapted for broadband and AI infrastructure permitting.

2. With these evolving technologies in mind, are there any steps Congress should take to make sure we're "future proofing" permitting processes to accommodate further technological development and changing broadband needs?

INCOMPAS Response

Yes. Congress can take several steps to accommodate further technological development and changing broadband needs in permitting:

- Codify digital permitting standards across federal agencies.
- Encourage AI-readiness by supporting pilot programs that test AI tools in permitting workflows.
- Mandate periodic reviews of permitting processes to ensure they reflect current infrastructure needs, including fiber, energy corridors, and AI data centers.

³ <https://aimagazine.com/news/microsoft-uses-ai-to-tackle-clean-energy-permit-bottleneck>