



August 7, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**RE: H.R. 4776, The Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act**

Dear Chairman Westerman:

The Colorado Mining Association (CMA) writes in strong support for H.R. 4776, the bipartisan Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act of 2025. CMA, established in 1876, is the oldest professional mining industry trade association in the United States. CMA represents companies that are engaged in the exploration, production, and refining of mineral resources, as well as mining companies with national and global headquarters in Colorado, equipment manufacturers, law firms, engineering and consulting organizations, and financial institutions serving the mining industry. CMA's members conduct mining, exploration, and reclamation operations in Colorado and throughout the country, frequently involving federal permitting requirements subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

While CMA members are proud of their legacy as responsible stewards of the environment and our close partnerships with federal regulatory agencies performing environmental reviews pursuant to NEPA, the NEPA process has suffered from protracted project delays and frequent litigation that hinder the review process and the ability of agency officials to fulfill their obligations to analyze the potential environmental impacts of permitting actions. According to a recent analysis by S&P Global, the average time for mines to go from discovery to production in the United States is 29 years, among the longest timeframes in the world.<sup>1</sup> This disadvantageous timeline is driven in large part by regulatory factors, including the current NEPA process and associated legal challenges which in some cases delay responsible mining operations by years or even decades.

NEPA associated delays can drive away investment from the U.S. and towards jurisdictions with poor environmental standards. This application of the statute falls short of NEPA's original design to inform agency decision making and does a disservice to both the U.S. mining industry and the environment. The current NEPA process delays the development of minerals vital to our national security interests, clean energy

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<sup>1</sup> S&P Global, Mine Development Times: The U.S. Perspective, at 6 (June, 2024)

production and energy security, and the development of emerging technologies to remain competitive in the global market. Colorado in particular has among the richest mineral endowments in the country as well as some of the most stringent environmental standards in the world. As such, both our economy and the environment benefit from mineral development in Colorado. Our state is also home to a large footprint of federal lands where exploration and development of mineral resources involves NEPA review.

The SPEED Act is a welcome package of reforms to refocus NEPA on analyzing specific actions in a timely manner so that agency officials can make informed decisions and responsible projects can move forward expeditiously. The SPEED Act focuses reviews on the potential environmental effects proximate to agency actions, clarifies the scope of “major federal actions” appropriate for review, eliminating duplicative multi-agency NEPA review, addresses NEPA review time delays, and establishes an appropriate statute of limitations for challenging NEPA reviews. By making these commonsense improvements H.R. 4776 will restore the original design of NEPA to inform agency decision makers on the potential effects of decisions under consideration by the relevant agency and allow projects to move forward without the distracted review of matters extraneous to the decision at issue, frivolous litigation, and endless delays.

CMA is thankful to the bill sponsors from both parties for bringing forward these much-needed reforms, and we look forward to working with you and the House Committee on Natural Resources to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Adam Eckman  
President & CEO  
Colorado Mining Association