



November 18, 2025

House Committee on Natural Resources

1324 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Westerman and Members of the House Committee on Natural Resources,

Center of the American Experiment strongly supports the policies in the Amendment in Nature of a Substitute of the Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act. American Experiment is a nonprofit civic and education public policy organization based in Minnesota.

Minnesota illustrates the profound costs of an inefficient federal permitting system. The state is home to one of the world's largest undeveloped copper, nickel, and cobalt deposits in the Duluth Complex. Yet NEPA-related delays and uncertainty at the federal level have stymied responsible resource development in Minnesota, as evidenced by the long and flip-flopping permitting histories of the NorthMet project and the Twin Metals project. Such permitting whiplash deprives local communities of high-paying jobs, tax revenue, and long-promised economic opportunity.

American Experiment's [October 2024 report](#) detailed how NEPA has drifted from a procedural safeguard into a substantive barrier, requiring agencies to evaluate speculative cumulative impacts far beyond their statutory mission. While Executive Order 14154, the Supreme Court's decision in [Seven County Infrastructure Coalition v. Eagle County](#), and the One Big Beautiful Bill Act have begun to restore balance, permanent legislative reform remains essential.

The [SPEED Act](#) provides certainty for developers of mines, oil and gas projects, and all projects that have a federal permitting nexus, by:

1. Clarifying that NEPA is a "purely procedural statute" that "does not mandate particular results," consistent with *Seven County*;
2. Clarifying the scope of a "major federal action" so that the mere use of federal funds does not trigger NEPA;
3. Clarifying "reasonably foreseeable impacts," to those with "reasonably close causal relationship to... the immediate project" and prohibiting consideration of

“speculative” actions, actions that are “separate in time or place from the project or action,” or separate existing or potential actions;

4. Prohibiting agencies from rescinding or invalidating completed NEPA documents except by court order;
5. Establishing judicial review limitations, including a 150-day statute of limitations for parties who submitted a “substantive and unique comment” to file claims from the date of the final agency action on a project;
6. Requiring courts to resolve NEPA cases within 180 days while keeping agency actions in effect during remand;
7. Extending the validity of programmatic environmental documents from five to ten years;
8. Empowering cooperative federalism with the states by allowing prior state or tribal reviews to satisfy NEPA requirements.

The SPEED Act’s provisions represent meaningful, durable progress that will provide predictability for all sectors. Congress may further consider establishing firm time limits for the completion of environmental impact statements and environment assessments, and by ensuring judicial deference does not enable hostile agencies to obstruct otherwise lawful projects, potentially through differing interpretations of “proximately caused” effects and “reasonably close” causal relationships.

Congress has an opportunity to end decades of unnecessary delay, bolster domestic supply chains, reduce reliance on foreign adversaries, and create lasting prosperity for Minnesota and the nation. Center of the American Experiment applauds the SPEED Act and the efforts of Chairman Westerman, Rep. Golden, and the members of the House Natural Resources committee to make the NEPA process work better for all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sarah Montalbano".

Sarah Montalbano

Energy and Natural Resources Policy Fellow

Center of the American Experiment