

**Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources**

**The University of Texas Permian Basin Midland campus
Engineering Building, Henry Auditorium**

**February 13, 2023
3:00 PM (CT)**

Oversight Field Hearing titled “*Federal Energy Production Supports Local Communities*”

Questions from Rep. Westerman for Doug Ackerman, President and CEO of the New Mexico Oil and Gas Association

1. The small BLM office in Carlsbad, New Mexico receives approximately one-third of all applications for permit to drill submitted to the Bureau of Land Management. A recent GAO report (GAO-20-329) stated that the APD approval time decreased nationally from 196 days in May 2016 to 94 days in June 2019. This dramatic decrease was largely in due to BLM field offices prioritizing APDs for review under the Trump administration. APD approvals are again approaching 300-day delays, with some operators waiting years for approval.
 - a. Do you think that BLM headquarters should allow and encourage BLM field offices with excessive APD delays to prioritize APD approval by working proactively with the private sector to ensure the necessary information is submitted and reviewed in a timely manner to comply with the 30 day deadline for APD approval in the Mineral Leasing Act?
 - b. Do you think BLM headquarters should consider a reallocation of resources and staff to local BLM field offices with excessive APD delays to alleviate permitting backlogs?
2. What else can the BLM and Congress do to address permitting backlogs and ensure permits are issued in a timely manner?
3. How can this administration encourage companies to reinvest capital in exploration to increase production and drive down oil and natural gas prices?