October 30, 2026

RE: Conservative Coalition in Support of Permitting Reform Bill

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we urge Congress to pass the *Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act of 2026* (BAAJA).

The bill would lower energy costs, speed up approval of critical infrastructure projects, curb superfluous litigation, and give builders and investors the certainty they need to commit capital.

Needed energy and infrastructure projects currently spend years under review before they can even begin. Approvals can be delayed by redundant paperwork, blocked by a single state for political reasons, or tied up in litigation long after a permit is issued. Left-wing activists, who oppose entire categories of American energy production, use these tedious review processes to stall or stop projects.

These delays discourage investment and reward obstruction, leaving America more dependent on foreign energy sources. The costs are passed on to families and businesses through higher energy costs and fewer jobs.

BAAJA contains several reforms our organizations have long supported:

- **Smarter environmental review.** BAAJA narrows when a full National Environmental Policy Act review is required and what agencies must study once one begins. Repairs to essential infrastructure, gas pipeline work within existing rights-of-way, and geothermal testing would no longer trigger review.
- **Firm timelines.** BAAJA requires agencies to tell an applicant whether its application is complete within 60 days. Once the environmental review is done, the lead agency would have 45 days to issue a final decision, and other agencies would have 90 days to act on the remaining permits. Project sponsors could go to court to enforce these deadlines.
- **Faster related reviews.** BAAJA shortens Endangered Species Act consultations from 90 days to 60 and requires historic preservation reviews to finish alongside the environmental review, not after it.

- **Litigation reform.** BAAJA cuts the time to challenge a National Environmental Policy Act review from six years to 150 days. Courts would s end flawed reviews back to the agency to fix, not halt the project. This would prevent the progressive strategy of suing not to win, but to run out the clock.
- **Limits on the single-state veto.** BAAJA reforms Clean Water Act Section 401 so that states must show a real, unresolvable water-quality concern before blocking a project, rather than using the process to stop infrastructure for unrelated reasons.
- **Permit certainty.** BAAJA limits when an agency can pull back a permit after it's issued to a short list of specific cases. Projects that are under construction, or close to finished, would not be reversed for political reasons.
- These reforms apply to all types of projects: pipelines, power plants, roads, and bridges.

Permitting delays raise costs. Federal environmental reviews for major projects have averaged 4.5 years. New power plants wait more than five years, at the median, just to connect to the grid. The Mountain Valley Pipeline was announced in 2014 with a 2018 completion date and a $3.5 billion price tag. Repeated lawsuits from environmental activist groups delayed it until 2024 and drove the final cost to $9.6 billion. The pricier these projects become, the more Americans have to pay for their output (or lack thereof).

We need these reforms now more than ever. Electricity demand is growing at its fastest pace since 2000 and residential prices are up nearly 5 percent this year. The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) has warned that 13 of 23 regional assessment areas will face resource adequacy challenges over the next 10 years. With these growing problems, lawmakers must act to ensure more growth to keep up with rising demand. Otherwise, Americans will see even higher energy bills and face a less reliable grid.

Faster, more predictable approvals mean more energy supply reaches the market sooner and at lower cost. Lower project costs mean lower costs passed on to ratepayers. Greater certainty encourages private capital to build energy infrastructure. America cannot lead in necessary areas if it takes a decade to build a pipeline or a power plant.

Permitting delays also cost American jobs. Americans for Prosperity reviewed 30 energy projects in six states and found that federal permitting delays have held up or eliminated tens of thousands of jobs and roughly $75 billion in economic benefits. Six were canceled outright, accounting for the loss of 38,000 construction and permanent jobs. Of the 30, only five are now operating with 12 still being stuck in permitting. The jobs lost are positions for welders, pipefitters, electricians, and plant

operators – good paying jobs, often in rural communities, that don't require costly four-year degrees.

After years of debate, BAAJA offers meaningful permitting reform. It would speed up approvals, lower energy costs, and create jobs. We urge members of Congress to pass the *Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act*.

Onward,

Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform

Marty Connors
Chair, Alabama Center Right Coalition

Saulius "Saul" Anuzis
President, American Association of Senior Citizens

Dick Patten
President, American Business Defense Council

Robert Romano
Executive Director, Americans for Limited Government

Brent Gardner
Chief Government Affairs Officer, Americans for Prosperity

Ryan Ellis
President, Center for a Free Economy

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Jeffrey Mazzella
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Head of External Affairs, Consumer Choice Center

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President, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

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