

SPEED ACT: STANDARDIZING PERMITTING AND EXPEDITING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

December 15, 2025

TOPLINE POINTS

- ★ The Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act restores the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) to its original purpose as a procedural check rather than a tool to weaponize against lawful energy and infrastructure projects.
- ★ The SPEED Act shortens timelines, limits obstructionist litigation, and improves stability and predictability for important projects to expedite building the affordable, reliable power that America needs.
- ★ The SPEED Act creates a more efficient, effective, and timely NEPA review process that will unleash domestic innovation, infrastructure development, and energy production.

9 WINS IN THE SPEED ACT:

1. NEPA is expressly codified as “purely procedural,” which limits agencies to disclosure and review instead of treating NEPA as a tool to oppose development.
2. Environmental impacts assessed under NEPA must be proximate and realistically predictable, not remote or speculative demands for endless climate and environmental impact modeling.
3. The SPEED Act widens the use of categorical exclusions and reliance on comparable federal, state, or tribal reviews to fast-track more routine energy, mining, and infrastructure activity, instead of requiring full EAs and EISs.
4. The Act narrows the meaning of “major federal action;” federal funding alone no longer automatically triggers NEPA; only decisions where Washington truly controls project effects qualify as major federal actions.
5. Purpose-and-need statements for applicant projects must reflect the sponsor’s goals, blocking agencies from rewriting proposals into smaller or different projects.
6. Research cannot endlessly delay projects. The SPEED Act allows agencies to decide based on the research record at the time of application, rather than requiring applicants to wait for new studies.
7. CEQ’s duties now expressly include “energy,” so NEPA oversight must account for abundant, reliable power as a national interest.
8. The SPEED Act rebalances judicial review to reduce weaponized litigation by creating shorter filing windows, tighter standing, limited remedies, and a bar on challenges to categorical exclusions to curb sue-to-stall NEPA tactics.
9. The SPEED Act locks in certainty for completed environmental documents and authorizations by limiting when agencies can revoke or rewrite them after investors have committed capital.

3 WAYS TO FURTHER IMPROVE PERMITTING:

- **Transmission:** Proposed amendments to the speed act or similar bills should reject attempts to trade special favors on transmission issues in a way that allows specific generation sources to “socialize” or broadly allocate the costs of new transmission infrastructure (via FERC orders [1000](#) or [1920](#)) to other generation sources. The bill should retain “beneficiary pays” requirements.
- **Firming & Dispatchability:** Future proposals should restrict expedited permitting procedures, categorical exclusions, and streamlined judicial review provisions to apply to energy sources that provide firm, dispatchable electric generation or that provide firm fuel supplies.
- **Subsidized Energy:** Future proposals should restrict expedited permitting procedures, categorical exclusions, and streamlined judicial review provisions to energy sources that are not eligible to claim direct federal [subsidies](#) in the form of the clean electricity production credit (Sec. 45Y of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) or the clean electricity investment credit (Sec. 48E of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).

BACKGROUND ON NEPA:

NEPA requires federal agencies to study and disclose the environmental impacts of so-called “major federal actions” and created the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to oversee that process. Over time, what began as a concise disclosure framework has grown into a vast compliance regime where environmental impact statements often exceed hundreds of pages and take years to complete. Today, the combination of long timelines, heavy and duplicative paperwork, and easy litigation opportunities for activists has turned NEPA into a primary tool for opponents of development to delay or block energy, mining, and infrastructure projects that already comply with substantive environmental laws.