

March 23, 2015

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY:

The undersigned groups strongly support H.R. 348, the “Responsibly And Professionally Invigorating Development (RAPID) Act of 2015,” and urge the Committee to report it favorably to the House of Representatives as soon as practicable. The RAPID Act would provide a streamlined process for developers, builders, and designers to obtain environmental permits and approvals for their projects in a timely and efficient manner, allowing jobs to be created and the economy to grow.

Every year that major projects are stalled or cancelled because of a dysfunctional permitting process and a system that allows limitless challenges by opponents of development, millions of jobs are not created. For example, 351 stalled energy projects reviewed in one 2010 study (*Project No Project*) had a total economic value of over \$1 trillion and represented 1.9 million American jobs not created. *Project No Project* showed that in the energy sector alone, one year of delay translates into millions of jobs not created.

The Responsibly And Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2015 would improve the environmental review and permitting process by:

- Coordinating responsibilities among multiple agencies involved in environmental reviews to ensure that “the trains run on time”;
- Providing for concurrent reviews by agencies, rather than serial reviews;
- Allowing state-level environmental reviews to be used where the state has done a competent job, thereby avoiding needless duplication of state work by federal reviewers;
- Requiring that agencies involve themselves in the process early and comment early, avoiding eleventh-hour objections that can restart the entire review timetable;
- Establishing a reasonable process for determining the scope of project alternatives, so that the environmental review does not devolve into an endless quest to evaluate infeasible alternatives;
- Consolidating the process into a single Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and single Environmental Assessment (EA) for a project, except as otherwise provided by law;
- Imposing reasonable fixed deadlines for completion of an EIS or EA; and
- Reducing the statute of limitations to challenge a final EIS or EA from six years to 180 days.

The RAPID Act is a practical, industry-wide approach that builds on successful provisions for environmental review management found in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), and Section 1609 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The RAPID Act also embodies the procedural improvements to “cut red tape” as called for by the Obama Administration, including, most

recently, in his January 28, 2014, State of the Union Address. In its fiscal year 2016 budget, the administration stated that “[t]o further accelerate economic growth and improve the competitiveness of the American economy, the Administration is taking action to modernize and improve the efficiency of the Federal permitting process for major infrastructure projects.”

The RAPID Act addresses the problem far too many projects face today: lengthy project delays from endless environmental reviews and challenges that result in lost opportunities to create jobs and grow the economy. Every year of delay results in millions of jobs not created. The creation of millions of jobs is worth ensuring that our government works faster and more efficiently.

The undersigned groups strongly support H.R. 348. The RAPID Act would be the strong action needed to speed up the permitting process and let important projects move forward, allowing millions of workers to get back to work. We urge you to support this important bill.

Sincerely,

Alaska Miners Association
Alaska Trucking Association
Aluminum Association
American Bakers Association
American Chemistry Council
American Coatings Association
American Coke and Coal Chemicals Institute
American Exploration & Mining Association
American Forest & Paper Association
American Loggers Council
American Petroleum Institute
American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA)
American Trucking Associations
Arizona Mining Association
Arlington Chamber of Commerce – TX
Associated Builders and Contractors
Associated Builders and Contractors, Rocky Mountain
Associated Industries of Massachusetts
Associated Oregon Industries
Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.
Associated Wire Rope Fabricators
Association of American Railroads
Association of Oil Pipe Lines
Association of Washington Business
Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce – ND
Brick Industry Association
Buffalo Niagara Partnership – NY
Business Council of Alabama
Campbell County Chamber of Commerce – WY

Can Manufacturers Institute
Central Florida Chapter – Associated Builders and Contractors
Chandler Chamber of Commerce – AZ
Chemical Industry Council of Illinois
Colorado Mining Association
Colorado Roofing Association
Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute
Construction Industry Round Table
Council of Industrial Boiler Owners
Drycleaning & Laundry Institute
Florida Chamber of Commerce
Florida Transportation Builders' Association
Gas Processors Association
Global Cold Chain Alliance
Goleta (CA) Chamber of Commerce
Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association
Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce – TX
Greater Louisville Inc. – KY
Greater North Dakota Chamber
Idaho Association of Commerce & Industry
Idaho Mining Association
Independent Electrical Contractors
Independent Petroleum Association of America
Indiana Chamber of Commerce
Indio Chamber of Commerce – CA
Industrial Energy Consumers of America
Industrial Minerals Association – North America
International Association of Drilling Contractors
International Franchise Association
International Sign Association
Iowa Association of Business and Industry
Johnson City Chamber of Commerce – TN
Longview Chamber of Commerce – TX
Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce – VA
Louisiana Landowners Association
Mesa Chamber of Commerce – AZ
Metals Service Center Institute
Michigan Association of Timbermen
Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
Montana Chamber of Commerce
Montana Coal Council
Montana Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association
Morris County Chamber of Commerce – NJ
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Neighborhoods

National Black Chamber of Commerce
National Federation of Independent Business
National Grain and Feed Association
National Industrial Sand Association
National Mining Association
National Renderers Association
National Roofing Contractors Association
New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce
New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association
Non-Ferrous Founders' Society
North American Equipment Dealers Association
North Country Chamber of Commerce – NY
Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
Ohio Forestry Association, Inc.
Orange County Business Council – CA
Pelican Chapter Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.
Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry
Pennsylvania Manufactured Housing Association
Petroleum Marketers Association of America
Professional Logging Contractors of Maine
Rhode Island Chapter of Associated Builders & Contractors
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership – CA
Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce – AZ
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council
South Carolina Timber Producers Association
Southeastern Wood Producers Association
Tempe (AZ) Chamber of Commerce
Texas Association of Business
Treated Wood Council
Tucson Metro Chamber – AZ
Tulsa Regional Chamber – OK
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Utah Mining Association
Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Coal & Energy Alliance
Wichita Independent Business Association
Wisconsin Grocers Association
Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce
Women's Mining Coalition
Wyoming Stock Growers Association