

114TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2295

To amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to identify and designate National Energy Security Corridors for the construction of natural gas pipelines on Federal land, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 13, 2015

Mr. MACARTHUR (for himself and Mr. RICHMOND) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to identify and designate National Energy Security Corridors for the construction of natural gas pipelines on Federal land, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Energy Secu-  
5 rity Corridors Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY**  
2 **CORRIDORS ON FEDERAL LANDS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 28 of the Mineral Leasing  
4 Act (30 U.S.C. 185) is amended as follows:

5 (1) In subsection (b)—

6 (A) by striking “(b)(1) For the purposes of  
7 this section ‘Federal lands’ means” and insert-  
8 ing the following:

9 “(b)(1) For the purposes of this section ‘Federal  
10 lands’—

11 “(A) except as provided in subparagraph (B),  
12 means”; and

13 (B) by adding at the end of paragraph (1)  
14 the following:

15 “(B) for purposes of granting an application for  
16 a natural gas pipeline right-of-way, means all lands  
17 owned by the United States except—

18 “(i) such lands held in trust for an Indian  
19 or Indian tribe; and

20 “(ii) lands on the Outer Continental  
21 Shelf.”.

22 (2) By redesignating subsection (b), as so  
23 amended, as subsection (z), and transferring such  
24 subsection to appear after subsection (y) of that sec-  
25 tion.

1           (3) By inserting after subsection (a) the fol-  
2           lowing:

3           “(b) NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY CORRIDORS.—

4           “(1) DESIGNATION.—In addition to other au-  
5           thorities under this section, the Secretary shall—

6                   “(A) identify and designate suitable Fed-  
7                   eral lands as National Energy Security Cor-  
8                   ridors (in this subsection referred to as a ‘Cor-  
9                   ridor’), which shall be used for natural gas  
10                  transmission facilities; and

11                   “(B) incorporate such Corridors upon des-  
12                   ignation into the relevant agency land use and  
13                   resource management plans or equivalent plans.

14           “(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In evaluating Federal  
15           lands for designation as a National Energy Security  
16           Corridor, the Secretary shall—

17                   “(A) employ the principle of multiple use  
18                   to ensure route decisions balance national en-  
19                   ergy security needs with existing land use prin-  
20                   ciples;

21                   “(B) seek input from other Federal coun-  
22                   terparts, State, local, and tribal governments,  
23                   and affected utility and pipeline industries to  
24                   determine the best suitable, most cost-effective,

1 and commercially viable acreage for natural gas  
2 transmission facilities;

3 “(C) focus on transmission routes that im-  
4 prove domestic energy security through increas-  
5 ing reliability, relieving congestion, reducing  
6 natural gas prices, and meeting growing de-  
7 mand for natural gas; and

8 “(D) take into account technological inno-  
9 vations that reduce the need for surface dis-  
10 turbance.

11 “(3) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall estab-  
12 lish procedures to expedite and approve applications  
13 for rights-of-way for natural gas pipelines across  
14 National Energy Security Corridors, that—

15 “(A) ensure a transparent process for re-  
16 view of applications for rights-of-way on such  
17 corridors;

18 “(B) require an approval time of not more  
19 than 1 year after the date of receipt of an ap-  
20 plication for a right-of-way; and

21 “(C) require, upon receipt of such an ap-  
22 plication, notice to the applicant of a predict-  
23 able timeline for consideration of the applica-  
24 tion, that clearly delineates important mile-  
25 stones in the process of such consideration.

1 “(4) STATE INPUT.—

2 “(A) REQUESTS AUTHORIZED.—The Gov-  
3 ernor of a State may submit a request to the  
4 Secretary of the Interior to designate a Cor-  
5 ridor on Federal land in that State.

6 “(B) CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS.—  
7 After receiving such a request, the Secretary  
8 shall respond in writing, within 30 days—

9 “(i) acknowledging receipt of the re-  
10 quest; and

11 “(ii) setting forth a timeline in which  
12 the Secretary shall grant, deny, or modify  
13 such request and state the reasons for  
14 doing so.

15 “(5) SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF CORRIDORS.—  
16 In implementing this subsection, the Secretary shall  
17 coordinate with other Federal Departments to—

18 “(A) minimize the proliferation of duplica-  
19 tive natural gas pipeline rights-of-way on Fed-  
20 eral lands where feasible;

21 “(B) ensure Corridors can connect effec-  
22 tively across Federal lands; and

23 “(C) utilize input from utility and pipeline  
24 industries submitting applications for rights-of-  
25 way to site corridors in economically feasible

1 areas that reduce impacts, to the extent prac-  
2 ticable, on local communities.

3 “(6) NOT A MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION.—Des-  
4 ignation of a Corridor under this subsection, and in-  
5 corporation of Corridors into agency plans under  
6 paragraph (1)(B), shall not be treated as a major  
7 Federal action for purpose of section 102 of the Na-  
8 tional Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.  
9 4332).

10 “(7) NO LIMIT ON NUMBER OR LENGTH OF  
11 CORRIDORS.—Nothing in this subsection limits the  
12 number or physical dimensions of Corridors that the  
13 Secretary may designate under this subsection.

14 “(8) OTHER AUTHORITY NOT AFFECTED.—  
15 Nothing in this subsection affects the authority of  
16 the Secretary to issue rights-of-way on Federal land  
17 that is not located in a Corridor designated under  
18 this subsection.”.

19 (b) APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BEFORE DESIGNATION  
20 OF CORRIDORS.—Any application for a right-of-way under  
21 section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 185)  
22 that is received by the Secretary of the Interior before des-  
23 ignation of National Energy Security Corridors under the  
24 amendment made by subsection (a) of this section shall

1 be reviewed and acted upon independently by the Sec-  
2 retary without regard to the process for such designation.

3 (c) DEADLINE.—Within 2 years after the date of the  
4 enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall  
5 designate at least 10 National Energy Security Corridors  
6 under the amendment made by subsection (a) in contig-  
7 uous States referred to in section 368(b) of the Energy  
8 Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15926(b)).

9 **SEC. 3. NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.**

10 The Secretary of the Interior shall promptly notify  
11 the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Rep-  
12 resentatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural  
13 Resources of the Senate of each instance in which any  
14 agency or official of the Department of the Interior fails  
15 to comply with any schedule established under section  
16 15(c) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717n(c)).

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