

has been delay after delay and local communities waiting endlessly for the aid they desperately need.

Madam Speaker, my bill would reverse this disastrous policy and speed up the flow of Federal dollars to western North Carolina and communities across the country. It is clear that Congress needs to take action. Our people need the relief that Congress approved over a year ago.

RECOGNIZING SHARON MURPHY

(Mr. LANGWORTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sharon Murphy of Horseheads, New York, a truly special public servant from New York's southern tier. For more than 15 years, Sharon served the people of New York's 23rd Congressional District with professionalism, compassion, and a genuine heart for service.

She was a steady presence in our community, serving three consecutive Members of Congress, and always putting the people first. Known for her kindness and reliability, Sharon often worked behind the scenes to help families through their most difficult moments. She took great pride in managing our service academy nominations, helping young men and women take their first steps toward a career serving this Nation.

As Sharon Murphy enters her retirement, I will miss having her on my staff. I will miss her. My staff will miss her. My community will miss her.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Sharon Murphy for her outstanding service and in wishing her every happiness in this next chapter of her life.

COUNTING BLESSINGS AND CELEBRATING LIGHT OVER DARKNESS

(Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I try to slow down at this time of the year, a season of giving thanks, coming together, and counting blessings. It is a season, regardless of one's faith—maybe really because of all of our faith traditions—to celebrate light, light over darkness.

For 75 years, my community of Abington, Pennsylvania, has hosted an interfaith Thanksgiving service. This year, hundreds gathered at Temple Beth Am, warmly welcomed by Rabbi Robert Leib.

Pastors and priests, rabbis and imams, we were young and old, faith leaders and civic leaders, and what was clear from the readings and beautiful song is our different faiths have so much more in common. It is a common call to lift one another, welcome the

stranger, feed the hungry, mourn with those who mourn, to love one another, price peace over conflict, and recognize our common humanity. It is "Tikkun olam"; "repair the world."

This season, as we have come by a way we did not know to the end of another year, I am counting blessings and focusing on the light.

□ 0920

HONORING GLENN MILLER

(Mrs. GRIJALVA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a member of the Grijalva team who has served this great institution since 2003.

Glenn Miller was a trusted source of wisdom, institutional knowledge, and a sounding board to my father, Congressman Raul Grijalva.

Throughout his more than two decades of public service in Washington, Glenn brought a mix that is hard to find: brutal honesty and unrelenting compassion.

His frank insight was instrumental for the House Natural Resources Committee, including flagship efforts such as the Donald McEachin Environmental Justice for All Act and the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni-Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument.

During complex negotiations, Glenn was the reason that every voice was heard. His leadership produced enduring reforms that will impact generations and continue to inspire Federal policies that promise a cleaner, fairer future where every community enjoys clean air, clean water, open space, and economic opportunity.

I thank Glenn for standing by my dad's side for 37 years and for all he has done for me and my entire family. We love Glenn.

STANDARDIZING PERMITTING AND EXPEDITING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4776.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 951 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4776.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. MILLER) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0920

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4776) to amend the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 to clarify ambiguous provisions and facilitate a more efficient, effective, and timely environmental review process, with Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 4776, the Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development Act.

The SPEED Act is a focused, bipartisan effort to restore common sense and accountability to Federal permitting by reforming the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA.

When Congress passed NEPA in 1969, it did so with the best of intentions. It directed Federal agencies to consider the environmental impacts of major Federal actions.

Unfortunately, what was meant to facilitate responsible development has been twisted into a bureaucratic bottleneck that delays investments in the infrastructure and technologies that make our country run.

The first Trump administration found that the average NEPA environmental impact statement between 2013 and 2018 totaled 575 pages and took 4.7 years to complete. A quarter of them took 6 years or more, a glacial pace that costs the economy more than \$100 billion a year.

Madam Chair, what reward do project sponsors get for persevering through this slog? Too often, a gauntlet of premeditated, predatory lawsuits. Nationally, NEPA is the most litigated environmental statute. According to the Breakthrough Institute, just 10 environmental organizations are responsible for 35 percent of all NEPA lawsuits. On average, it takes over 4 years to resolve NEPA-related litigation on environmental impact statements. I doubt there is a single Member of the House who has not heard of a NEPA horror story from a family construction company or a local official back home. Today, the word "NEPA" is more synonymous with red tape and waste than genuine environmental protection. The SPEED Act would restore

NEPA to its original aim of intentional, sustainable economic development.

The legislation fixes three major problems that, over the decades, have turned NEPA into a bureaucratic black hole.

First, it restricts NEPA lawsuits to parties who are actually impacted by a project, aligning judicial remedies with the procedural nature of NEPA, while establishing reasonable filing deadlines to prevent litigation from being used as an indefinite delay tactic.

Second, it clarifies what projects must go through NEPA, ensuring that only projects with significant Federal involvement trigger review.

Third, it codifies and strengthens key aspects of the Supreme Court's *Seven County Infrastructure Coalition v. Eagle County* decision from this past May, clarifying the scope of environmental review under NEPA.

The SPEED Act is project neutral. Its reforms will ensure a fair, predictable process and a level playing field for Federal projects across all agencies and industries.

It is also timely. The United States' energy demand is projected to rise by 35 to 50 percent by 2040. Data centers alone could see their energy consumption triple in the next 5 years. The electricity that we will need to power AI computing for civilian and military use is a national imperative. Every day, NEPA red tape is becoming more and more of an obstacle to American security and prosperity.

By restoring NEPA to its original intent, the SPEED Act will expedite infrastructure projects, bring down prices, and help Americans realize the energy dominance and mineral abundance that our natural resources promise.

That is why a coalition of more than 300 industry associations, businesses, and trade groups from all 50 States and Puerto Rico support this legislation. They know the SPEED Act means jobs, fairness, growth, and a safer, more affordable future.

Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman from Maine (Mr. GOLDEN) for his partnership in this effort. I also thank the many Members from across the aisle who have engaged in a productive manner to develop and improve this legislation.

Madam Chair, the SPEED Act will deliver the energy and infrastructure that Americans need. I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is our last day in session before Republicans close up shop and send everyone home for a couple of weeks.

The majority could be using this time to do something, such as provide actual solutions to the healthcare cliff that the country is about to go off of, address the affordable cost of all manner of goods and utilities that have been set in motion by their wrong-

headed policies, but no. Instead of doing anything to help Americans make ends meet, we are here on the floor giving more gifts to Big Oil, multibillion-dollar foreign mining corporations, and specialty interests like the NRA.

I guess merry Christmas to all of them and a big lump of coal for everyone else.

To no one's surprise, Republicans have been working all year on handouts to Big Oil that were written for and by the oil and gas industry. The first bill up on our Christmas list is for polluters. It has been at the top of their wish list for as long as I have been in this Congress. It is the SPEED Act, which is being sold to us as permitting reform, and a spoiler alert: It is not permitting reform.

The bill takes a sledgehammer to the National Environmental Policy Act, one of our foundational environmental laws.

NEPA was enacted in 1970 on a bipartisan basis to require Federal agencies to do something that seems very basic: to understand the consequences of their actions and to listen to the affected American communities before approving major proposed projects. It is often described as telling agencies that they need to look before they leap.

Madam Chair, I am not opposed to reforms to make NEPA and other laws work better and to make it more efficient, especially for the build-out of the stuff we need: clean energy and essential infrastructure. However, we can do that while maintaining appropriate environmental protections, respecting Tribal consultation, and protecting community input. The SPEED Act does great damage to all of those things.

Instead, it abandons transparency and accountability, while ignoring the single biggest permitting problem facing the energy sector right now: the Trump administration's all-out war against wind and solar, which includes a total refusal to permit these projects.

From the beginning, Democrats across Capitol Hill have expressed a willingness to negotiate on permitting reform, including changes to NEPA, but the first thing we needed to see was an end to the crazy, arbitrary war on clean energy that is needlessly driving up energy costs for millions of Americans.

I hope you will just take a look at the spaghetti mess behind me because this is what Republicans have done to the permitting process for wind and solar projects.

On July 15, Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum signed a memo listing 69 individual actions that require his personal sign-off. Of course, this requirement only applies to wind and solar projects, not to fossil fuels.

However, I will name just a few of the things that now require Secretary Burgum to pause his global tour promoting fossil fuels all over the world

and give personal sign-off. If you need a temporary use permit for anything, if you need a national trail system impact evaluation, or if you need visual impact analysis, the Secretary of the Interior himself has to take a look at what you are proposing and sign off—69 times if you want to actually get a permit for a wind and solar project.

□ 0930

This is madness. Since the memo's enactment, there has been only one single solar project all year long that has been approved. It was just yesterday, and it happened only after heavy lobbying from the Republican Governor of Nevada, who told the Department of the Interior that it wasn't just that project, that there are actually 33 gigawatts of solar and storage projects that are in limbo right now because of this logjam that they have created, and that they are going to be key to supporting affordable, reliable energy to meet increased load growth.

To be clear, this is just one project that has made it through the gauntlet. It was fully approved, by the way, under the Biden administration, but then the Trump folks came along and put the brakes on that project.

That is where we are. That is the context for this conversation, where my friends across the aisle claim to care so much about an efficient permitting process.

I think most Republicans would agree, at least privately I think they would agree, that wind and solar are essential parts of the energy mix, despite the President's war against them.

That is why, at markup, Chair WESTERMAN did incorporate a few Democratic ideas that at least attempted to provide some permitting certainty for projects of all kinds. Now, those amendments didn't come anywhere close to actually providing certainty for wind and solar projects in the face of the administration's crazy war on clean energy. The amendment would not get clean energy permits moving again, and it did nothing to help projects that the administration had already pulled the plug on.

Even that largely cosmetic step was too much for the Freedom Caucus, and so they struck again. They demanded that the Committee on Rules attach language to further stall clean energy permitting and to make it even easier for the Trump administration to continue blocking wind and solar projects in order to bring the SPEED Act to the floor today. That was the condition for our being here, debating this bill on the floor right now.

A bad bill got worse, so bad that the American Clean Power Association pulled its support, joining the Solar Energy Industries Association in opposing the bill. For months, we heard from Chair WESTERMAN exhibit A for why Democrats should feel comfortable supporting this bill: The American Clean Power Association supports it. That support has now curdled into opposition.

Mr. Chair, do you know who still supports it? The American Petroleum Institute and the Koch-backed Americans for Prosperity, which put out a statement immediately after the Freedom Caucus made the bill worse to announce their great affection and support for this bill.

The bill has lost any claim for advancing tech-neutral energy policy, if it ever had one. Trust me when I say that even if the House passes this bill today, it is going nowhere in the Senate. What a missed opportunity to tackle a serious issue that Democrats were very interested in working on in good faith to find some solutions for.

Mr. Chair, I strongly oppose this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I am glad my colleague across the aisle is so good at reading the mind of the Senate, but I know this legislation has bipartisan support in the House and the Senate. We have over 375 organizations from all industries in all 50 States that support this legislation.

Also, I think my friend made the case for why we need the SPEED Act. If we want to stop administrative ping-pong, then Congress has to act. The SPEED Act is the bill to give us permit certainty so that we can build all across our country in all different segments.

One area of the country that has been adversely affected by bad permitting is in northern Minnesota, the home of my friend, Mr. STAUBER, whose district has a lot of mining resources that can't be tapped because of permitting restraints and administrative ping-pong.

Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER), who is the chair of the Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals.

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4776, which I am proud to cosponsor.

I want to begin by commending two of my good friends, Republican Chairman BRUCE WESTERMAN of the Committee on Natural Resources and Democratic Representative JARED GOLDEN, for their work in developing a sensible, bipartisan, and balanced permitting reform package that will allow us to build all kinds of important projects around this great country.

Our permitting system is broken and has been broken for a long while. It is almost as if our current permitting system is designed to block projects rather than build them. This is something that all of us on both sides of the aisle should be able to agree on.

The bill before us today is not designed to cut corners or weaken our permitting system. It doesn't weaken environmental standards like the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, or Endangered Species Act, which are the bases of our environmental protection here in the United States. This legislation is simply meant to address NEPA, which I would like to remind my colleagues is a process statute.

NEPA has been weaponized for over half a century, virtually from day one.

In fact, the first lawsuit utilized to block a project under NEPA was filed mere weeks after the statute was signed into law. Since then, NEPA has created a cottage industry for attorneys who have made a living suing to block good projects.

The bill before us today is meant to streamline the NEPA process and close the loopholes that are constantly used to block good projects—projects that we need to modernize our infrastructure, ensure we have clean water, generate the energy that drives our economy, access critical minerals we need to compete on the world stage, and so much more.

Thanks to NEPA and our broken permitting system, it takes 29 years, on average, to permit and build a new mine in the United States. That is not okay.

I don't think a day goes by that I don't hear from a constituent about their permitting woes, and I figure that is probably the case for most of my colleagues in this Chamber on both sides of the aisle.

In northern Minnesota, the issue of permitting is particularly acute. Not only is our broken permitting system used to block important critical mining projects like Twin Metals, NewRange, and Talon, but it is also used to block simple core infrastructure projects that we can all agree on, like water infrastructure or roads and bridges.

In northern Minnesota, our cold winters lead us to having a short construction window, much shorter than the rest of the country. When a water infrastructure project or a road or bridge project gets delayed, and they miss that construction window, it delays the project months and adds hundreds of thousands of dollars to the project.

Mr. Chair, do you know who pays those costs? The local taxpayer, not those who are weaponizing loopholes in our permitting system to block necessary projects.

Our constituents have had to deal with the shortfalls of our broken permitting system for far too long, and it is about time we address it.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to address this bill.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I need to provide some translation services for those who may not be fluent in Orwellian distortion.

When my colleague says that this legislation only deals with NEPA, that it doesn't touch the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, or Endangered Species Act, what that really means is that within the four corners of this particular bill, they are not gutting those other laws. Rest assured, they are working separately to gut those other laws.

In fact, just last week, Republicans attacked longstanding Clean Water Act protections, and just yesterday, the Committee on Natural Resources had a markup that advanced their legislation to gut the Endangered Species Act.

For those who want to see a complete annihilation of environmental protections across the board, rest assured, our Republican friends are doing that, just not all of it within the four corners of this bill.

There is another translation that I think is needed. We heard from my friend from Arkansas that they want to end the administrative ping-pong process. What they really mean by that, if we actually read this bill, is that they want the 69 individual steps that Secretary Burgum has imposed on all solar and wind projects to remain in place. I guess that is not administrative ping-pong, but I think it is an important part of the translation.

Then, finally, we heard that this legislation is about restoring NEPA's original intent, to just be a procedure bill. It is important to understand that NEPA does require procedure, but it requires meaningful procedure for a very important purpose: making sure that government actions consider the impacts of what they are doing and, with transparency and accountability, include communities so we can protect the environment, human health, and other values.

□ 0940

When you strip all of that out and leave NEPA as a box-checking exercise, which is what this bill is, that is not preserving the original intent of NEPA.

Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. RANDALL).

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Chair, because of the Trump administration's policies, families in my district and districts across the country are struggling to afford their heating and electricity bills. Yes, we need more transmission and clean energy projects, and it is true that the permitting process is making that more difficult.

But how can anyone think that this administration, the Trump administration, is a good-faith partner in permitting reform? They have fired Federal workers and illegally canceled funding Congress already approved, including over \$1 billion for clean energy projects in Washington State that had strong community support: a long-anticipated hydrogen hub in the south sound, solar projects across the State and the country, and freight and drayage improvements in the trucking industry that would lower the cost of goods and decrease our environmental impact.

We could have been lowering costs, and we could have done it in partnership with environmental leaders, community leaders, and the leaders of Tribal nations. Tribes deserve to be meaningfully consulted on projects that affect their lands, water, and resources, no exceptions.

That is why I offered two amendments: one, to give Tribes sufficient time to engage in the permitting process, and then another to ensure the offshore oil and gas drilling projects, rubber-stamped by H.R. 1, July's big, ugly

law, still have to consider community feedback.

Republicans blocked my amendments, which is why I am voting “no” on the SPEED Act, a bill that doesn’t address the challenges my neighbors are experiencing.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ).

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Chair, the purpose of process is to create a predictable sequence of steps to achieve an outcome consistent with substantive law. When process is allowed to intrude, the purpose of the law itself is perverted.

As philosopher Franz Kafka described it, the process becomes punishment. You aren’t guilty or innocent yet. You are simply processed until you run out of money, time, or sanity.

Procedure exists to serve substantive rights, not to supplant them. As the Supreme Court stated in the Seven County case: NEPA is a purely procedural statute, not a mandate for a particular result.

This bill, H.R. 4776, is designed to create sideboards on process so that rote compliance is no longer the purpose of what we are about but instead we focus on progress for this Nation.

Mr. Chair, I urge support of this bill.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL).

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4776, the SPEED Act.

For more than 50 years, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, as it is called, has been the bedrock of conservation law and preserved the environment, human health, and the people’s voice in policy decisions.

The SPEED Act would limit the public review process and, quite frankly, would undermine the original intent of NEPA. I do understand the need to complete permitting and the Federal decisionmaking process more quickly than is happening, but we cannot do so at the cost of public input and transparency.

I happen to know. I happen to have lived with the original author of NEPA. What he did when this was passed—and this is called the Magna Carta of environmental laws around the world—is make sure that when something is going into someone’s community, the public has a right to input.

Now, I said yesterday, I told my chair: This isn’t the Ten Commandments. We should work together and try to make it better, but not at the expense of the public.

One of the most significant causes of permitting delays is limited capacity at the agencies that handle NEPA reviews. The SPEED Act does nothing to address recent cuts to staffing and funding at these agencies, which is going to further slow down project permitting.

I remain open to working on a bipartisan permitting reform, but it must be

done to protect the original intent of NEPA.

I strongly urge my colleagues to vote “no” on H.R. 4776.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the majority leader.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of the SPEED Act and the work that Chairman WESTERMAN and a bipartisan coalition of Members of Congress have done to bring a bill to the floor that actually focuses on letting us build things in America again, and, by the way, to lower the cost of those projects that we want to bring.

In the past, you would see years. Recently, it takes 10 years or longer to build things that used to take only 2 years. Why? Not because of trying to push things to the side.

This bill still requires, Mr. Chair, that we comply with all the State and local laws that are in place. We still would have to comply with Federal laws that are in place. But what it does is it finally brings common sense by cutting red tape, Mr. Chair, red tape that dramatically increases the costs and, in some cases, just makes it economically unfeasible to do projects, to build roads, to build bridges, to build pipelines to move energy, to lower costs for families, to build housing. This bill will allow us to bring more affordable housing to the marketplace in an environmentally protected way, by the way. Those laws are still in place, but they just can’t be abused as has been the case over decades.

When the law was created in the 1960s, the intent was never that NEPA would be used to stop projects. It would be that you would review these projects like you review any other laws, like the Endangered Species Act, which unfortunately has been heavily abused, too—we are going to reform that as well—and all of the other laws that are so abused to stop projects from being built in America.

Some people say why can some of these other countries build a road or a bridge in 16 months and it takes us 10 years to do it in America? It is because we have allowed these laws like NEPA to become so heavily abused, where people who have no relation to the project can file lawsuit after lawsuit that have nothing to do with the project. They just want to slow down and stop the project. How about we bring common sense back into permitting. That is what the SPEED Act does.

Again, do these people not trust the States that still have to permit at the local and State level, along with all of the other Federal permits that need to take place?

We used to build things in America at rapid speed. We can do it again, and we will do it again with the SPEED Act. Let’s allow America to do all the great innovative things it used to do.

Look at AI, what artificial intelligence is allowing us to bring. But we

need to upgrade our electricity system. We need to build more power plants, not just for families but for innovation. It is almost impossible to do if we don’t reform some of these outdated regulations that have been abused. Everybody knows they have been abused. Until we update our laws, we are not going to be able to build things again in America in a timely way.

Let’s get things done in 2 years, not 10 years or never. Many of these projects get shelved, just never get built. Really, they do get built. They get built in other countries because our laws haven’t been updated the way they need to be, to allow us to build things again in an economical way.

Lower the cost of building houses in America. Lower the cost of building roads and bridges in America. Lower the cost of building energy projects in America while still respecting environmental laws but just removing the red tape that is killing our ability to innovate.

This is a great bill that needs to happen. I am so glad Chairman WESTERMAN did the work to build a bipartisan coalition to get things done in America again. Let’s get the SPEED Act passed, Mr. Chair.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Chairman, for nearly 20 years, electricity demand in the U.S. has barely moved, but that era is over.

Today, we are facing a potential for electricity demand to grow up to fivefold. Meeting this energy demand will be a challenge. The environmental laws of the 1970s were built for defense, but the environmental imperative of today is to build, and that is why we need permitting reform.

□ 0950

However, that doesn’t just mean building pipelines and gas plants but also wind, utility-scale solar, and interregional high voltage electric transmission, all of the above. Like President Obama used to say, all of the above and like my Republican colleagues used to openly say at least before November of last year.

I was glad to see Chair WESTERMAN introduce and advance the SPEED Act. Reforming NEPA, the most litigated environmental law on the books, is necessary if we are going to make America competitive and if we are going to protect our environment.

There are many important reforms in this bill, and I want to note that. That is why earlier this month I led a letter with 30 of my Democratic colleagues, outnumbering the members of the Freedom Caucus we saw on the floor this week, but explaining our support for reform and exactly what we needed to get more Democrats to “yes” on SPEED.

At the top of that list is permitting certainty, which the ranking member has already mentioned. Mr. Chair, if

you apply for a permit for a project that complies with the law, then you should be able to get that permit, and you should be able to rely on it.

Thoughtful permitting reforms, many of which are in the SPEED Act, are meaningless if the executive branch is allowed to revoke issued permits for no good reason, or if the permitting process can be subjected to political gamesmanship.

The language added to the SPEED Act at markup would have restricted some of the political interference with issued permits, and that was a great start to solving the problem. It wasn't everything we needed, but it was a lot. I was confident that a bipartisan bill was well within reach.

I was really disappointed this week that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, after seeing that good bipartisan progress, decided to force this bill in the other direction this week to satisfy grievances and score political points instead of doing what is best for the country. An all-of-the-above energy strategy is what we were after. That took a big hit this week.

Giving Donald Trump, or any President, the ability to decide what gets permitting reform, which would be the effect of the partisan amendment added to the SPEED Act behind closed doors, significantly reduces certainty for investment in America.

That provision codifies a broken permitting status quo, instead of setting a level playing for everyone. Energy producers, investors, and communities want to know that investment in America, regardless of the electrons powering that investment, is safe from the swing of the political pendulum, and, unfortunately, that goal has not yet been achieved.

We need to get permitting reform done in this Congress. I look forward to working with my colleagues across the aisle in the Senate to craft a bipartisan product that could become law. This is not the final draft. I think there is more we can do.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), who is on the Natural Resources Committee and is also the chair of the Education and Workforce Committee.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chair, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, as the Member who represents one-half of NEPA's original author's district, I rise in strong support of the SPEED Act. This bipartisan, commonsense legislation will streamline our permitting process, making it faster, more predictable, and more accountable.

Currently, our broken permitting process delays critical energy, infrastructure, and manufacturing projects for years. This not only hurts workers but raises costs for hardworking families and makes us more dependent on foreign countries, including our adversaries.

In Michigan, we need access to reliable energy to meet our growing demands, increase affordability, and help us compete. However, these essential projects can't move forward if our permitting process is holding us back.

The SPEED Act addresses these issues by streamlining reviews, setting clear timelines, and improving coordination across agencies.

Mr. Chair, this legislation helps us build again in this country, from energy projects to manufacturing facilities. America is entering a golden age of energy dominance thanks to President Trump's policies and the Working Families Tax Cuts that Republicans passed earlier this year.

The SPEED Act builds on this progress by cutting bureaucratic red tape, bringing back good-paying jobs and revitalizing our infrastructure and energy sectors.

We must restore common sense to our permitting process so we can unleash American energy and lower costs for hardworking Michiganders.

For all those reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes." Michigan will thank you.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE).

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Chairman, I am a strong proponent of elimination of unnecessary regulations and of permitting reform, but this bill doesn't streamline permitting. It blindfolds the agencies meant to protect us and our natural resources.

Under this legislation, the agencies could not consider new science, even from the project applicant; conduct new environmental reviews; or assess indirect, let alone cumulative, impacts.

This anti-fact, anti-science administration would rather live in denial than understand the full impact that these projects could have on our health.

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court ruled on a case in my home State of Colorado. A 100-mile crude oil train route along the Colorado River was approved despite local objections and Federal estimates that spills would occur once every 5 years. The court said that agencies did not need to consider these downstream impacts.

This ruling alone is alarming, but the bill goes farther by outright preventing agencies from considering those factors.

This law says that ignorance is bliss. That is why I offered an amendment to widen the scope of review to ensure that agencies weigh all relevant facts and subsequent consequences. If we have information, then we should use it. Republicans refused to accept that amendment in the Rules Committee.

Rather than supporting agencies with the funding and staffing they need to process applications faster, Republicans just want them to look the other way.

Most Americans believe any job worth doing is worth doing right, even

if it takes a little more time. However, cutting corners today means that we are going to have to clean up disasters tomorrow, and those costs won't fall on us, Mr. Chairman. They will fall on the communities we are supposed to protect.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. STUTZMAN). The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BENTZ) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Ferrari, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 66. Concurrent resolution directing the Secretary of the Senate to make a correction in the enrollment of the bill S. 1071.

The message also announced that the Senate agreed to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 1071) "An Act to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disinter the remains of Fernando V. Cota from Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, Texas, and for other purposes."

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2393. An act to authorize a major medical facility project for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2026 in St. Louis, Missouri, and for other purposes.

S. 2503. An act to require all aircraft to be equipped with Automatic Dependent Surveillance—Broadcast In, to improve aviation safety, and for other purposes.

S. 3436. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the provision of certain services to veterans in the Freely Associated States, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 9355(a), as amended by Public Law 118-159, the Chair, on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, appoints the following Senator to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Air Force Academy:

The Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD).

The message also announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 9355(a), as amended by Public Law 118-159, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, appoints the following Senators to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Air Force Academy:

The Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) (Appropriations).

The Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

STANDARDIZING PERMITTING AND EXPEDITING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACT

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Utah (Ms. MALOY).