

March 5, 2014

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The undersigned groups strongly support H.R. 2641, the “Responsibly And Professionally Invigorating Development (RAPID) Act of 2013,” which 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 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 2013 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 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.

The RAPID Act addresses the problem far too many shovel-ready projects face today: lengthy project delays from endless environmental reviews and challenges 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. 2641. 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,

American Architectural Manufacturers Association
American Bakers Association
American Chemistry Council
American Coating Association
American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association
American Council of Engineering Companies
American Forest & Paper Association
American Foundry Society
American Highway Users Alliance
American Iron and Steel Institute
American Petroleum Institute
American Rental Association
American Road & Transportation Builders Association
American Supply Association
Associated Builders & Contractors
Associated Builders & Contractors - Rhode Island Chapter
Associated Equipment Distributors
Associated General Contractors
Associated Wire Rope Fabricators
Association of American Railroads
Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Construction Industry Round Table
Edison Electric Institute
Electronic Security Association
Forging Industry Association
Foundry Association of Michigan
Independent Electrical Contractors
Industrial Energy Consumers of America
Industrial Fasteners Institute
Industrial Minerals Association – North America
Metals Service Center Institute

Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association
National Association of Electrical Distributors
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors
National Black Chamber of Commerce
National Electrical Manufacturers Association
National Federation of Independent Business
National Industrial Sand Association
National Mining Association
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association
National Roofing Contractors Association
National Shippers Strategic Transportation Council
National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association
Non-Ferrous Founders' Society
North American Equipment Dealers Association
Nuclear Energy Institute
Ohio Cast Metals Association
Pacific-West Fastener Association
Pennsylvania Foundry Association
Petroleum Marketers Association of America
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council
South Carolina Timber Producers Association
Texas Cast Metals Association
Textile Rental Services Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Washington Retail Association
Wisconsin Cast Metals Association
Wisconsin Grocers Association