



June 16, 2020

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Crawford
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials
United State House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Members Graves and Crawford:

As the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure (Committee) gathers to consider surface transportation infrastructure legislation, the Association of Oil Pipe Lines (AOPL) urges you and members of the Committee to include provisions that will reduce unnecessary permitting delays standing in the way of putting all sectors of American infrastructure back to work.

Ranking Member Graves noted this spring, "[I]nfrastructure always has been and always will be the backbone of our economy. Congress can help provide a strong economic recovery and a strong economic future by working in partnership – not partisanship – to address America's infrastructure needs." Efficient reviews for project decisionmaking will help bring that economic recovery to America sooner.

No one can reasonably agree that federal review of proposed infrastructure projects should take five or ten or more years to complete. Streamlining of federal permitting can be a bipartisan issue. As you know, five years ago President Obama signed the bipartisan Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act with over 20 pages of highly detailed procedural rules for federal agencies to follow in issuing permits for major infrastructure projects.

There is more we can do to build on the success of the FAST Act. Language you propose for efficient environmental reviews for project decisionmaking will ensure public comment on potential alternatives, provide generous but finite environmental review development times with written waiver available, require statements on the purpose and need of the proposed agency action, describe the costs of the environmental review, set impact statement word limits unless the proposal is of unusual scope or complexity, and require timely participation by cooperating agencies. We believe all of these improvements set reasonable requirements for the vast majority of projects and allow for waiving the requirements when appropriate.

While markups of transportation legislation can focus on surface infrastructure, permitting provisions of the bipartisan FAST Act applied to infrastructure projects broadly, including energy pipeline projects. AOPL urges the Committee to again benefit infrastructure projects broadly by including permitting improvements you are proposing that will help put all sectors of American infrastructure back to work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Black".

Andrew Black
President & CEO